FORECAST
Rain or thundershowers would occur towards afternoon or evening

Max. tem: 30.7°C
Min. tem: 23.1°C
RH: 65%
Rainfall: Trace

In Brief

HYDERABAD

Last date extended

The MANUU has extended the last date of admissions to its open and distance learning programmes for the academic session 2024-25. Interested candidates can register online for admission up to November 10 and the last date to pay the admission fee is November 14. An e-prospectus and application form is available at manuu.edu.in/dde. For further details, contact helplines 040-23008463 or 040-23120600 (extension 2207 & 2208).

HYDERABAD

TG BIE admissions

The last date for admissions to the first-year Intermediate streams for the academic year 2024-25 has been extended with a late fee of Rs 500 up to October 15. However, there is no late fee for candidates joining the government run junior colleges. The TG BIE asked all junior colleges offering two-year Intermediate courses to admit students until the extended deadline. Students and parents have been asked to enrol in the colleges, which are affiliated to the TG BIE. A list of affiliated colleges is hosted on the website https://tgbie.cgg.gov.in/ .

TG mountaineer scales Mt Gorichen

Yashwanth Naik ascended the peak in Arunachal on Sept 19

Yashwanth Naik, accompanied by Transcend Adventure Company, was part of the first civilian team to successfully reach the summit of this challenging peak.

CITY BUREAU
HYDERABAD

Bhukya Yashwanth Naik, a 20-year-old mountaineer from Telangana State, has made the historic ascent of Mount Gorichen, a revered and formidable peak in Arunachal Pradesh.

The ascent of Mount Gorichen took place on September 19, following an 18-day expedition that began on September 4. Yashwanth Naik, accompanied by Transcend Adventure Company, was part of the first civilian team to successfully reach the summit of this challenging peak.

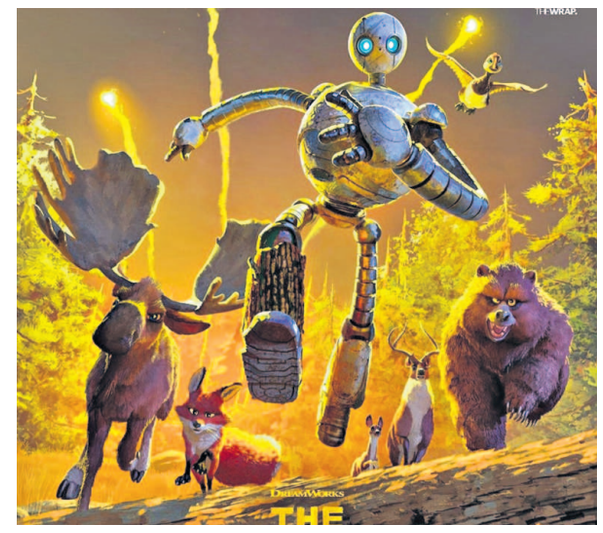
The route was particularly treacherous, with loose rocks and the daunting Marine Glacier adding to the difficulty.

Reflecting on his journey, Yashwanth Naik expressed his deep gratitude to his mentors, supporters, and well-wishers. "This achievement is not just mine; it belongs to everyone who believed in me and supported me on this journey. Climbing Mount Gorichen has been a lifelong dream, and I am honoured to have accomplished it," he said.

In the process of making the ascent of Mt. Gorichen, which is the highest scalable peak in Arunachal Pradesh towering at 6,488 metres above sea level, according to reports, Naik also became the youngest to successfully summit it. "I hope my story inspires other young people to dream big and persevere, no matter how challenging the path may seem," he said.

In addition to this remarkable feat, Yashwanth Naik is currently preparing for his next challenge: scaling Mount Everest. Yashwanth Naik hails from a tribal agency area in Telangana state, where he began his journey with modest resources but immense determination. His journey from Telangana's tribal agency to scaling some of the highest and most difficult peaks in the world is a true testament to the power of perseverance and the human spirit. Through sheer hard work, resilience, and an undying passion for mountaineering, he has risen to scale some of the most challenging peaks in the world, a press release added.

Visually stunning, emotionally powerful



Movie review

Title: The Wild Robot
Director: Chris Sanders
Cast: Lupita Nyong'o, Pedro Pascal, Catherine O'Hara, Bill Nighy, Kit Connor, Stephanie Hsu, Mark Hamill, Matt Berry and Ving Rhames

In the opening scenes of 'The Wild Robot', a chirpy metal android with a state-of-the-art processing unit wanders around a forest asking confused animals if it can help them, offering discount codes and stickers for future customers.

"Did anyone order me?" it asks. We did, it turned out. This adaptation of Peter Brown's winning middle grade novel is an absolute movie triumph, a soulful sweet-sad animated journey that may have your kids asking why you're tearing up so much.

Chris Sanders, the writer-director of 'How to Train Your Dragon', 'The Croods' and 'Lilo & Stitch', is the writer and director here. The assignment is daunting: Turn a beloved book with a few illustrations into a full-length movie without losing its tangy heart.

Sanders didn't just nail it; he lasered it. 'The Wild Robot' is the fish-out-of-water tale of a futuristic helper robot who ends up marooned on an island when a storm sinks its container ship.

It learns to adapt and connect with critters it has no programming for, even adopting the cutest gosling you'll ever see (sorry, Ryan). The robot — ROZZUM unit 7134, or "Roz" for short — is voiced by Lupita Nyong'o in a spectacularly nuanced performance, sprightly robotic at first, and eventually natural and wry.

The other voice actors — Pedro Pascal, Catherine O'Hara, Bill Nighy, Kit Connor, Stephanie Hsu, Mark Hamill, Matt Berry and Ving Rhames — aren't just hired guns that other animated movies use to entice an audience. Each is wonderfully calibrated.

Visually, 'The Wild Robot' is stunning, a textured world that is almost painterly. You can see snowflakes settle on mottled fur, moss on rocks, individual leaves in a den.

Is this the best animated movie of the year? Totally, so far. It might even be the best movie of the year. See you at the Oscars, Roz. AP

HHF launches dementia clinics for urban poor

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

In a unique initiative, a community-level mental health and dementia clinic, which will cater to the urban poor at Rajendranagar and Pahadi Shariff, has been launched by Helping Hand Foundation (HHF), the noted voluntary organisation in the field of health care.

The facilities, launched by HHF in collaboration with Asha Charitable Trust, and the Alzheimer's and Related Disorders Society of India (ARDSI) Hyderabad Deccan Chapter, aims to address the mental health needs of economically weaker sections, where awareness of dementia and mental health is low.

This is for the first time that mental health and dementia screenings are being conducted at primary care level in health care facilities run by HHF. The clinic's team functions under Dr. Chandrasekhar K, geriatric psychiatrist, MD, Asha Hospital, and president of ARDSI Hyderabad Deccan Chapter, along with senior caregivers. The mental health services that are available include preliminary neuropsychological assessment to evaluate cognitive impairment and later depending in the results, a detailed cognitive evaluation. The assessment tools have been validated for the Indian context by an expert team at NIMHANS.

Following a clinical diagnosis, persons with dementia will be managed using a three-pronged approach including medication, functional rehabilitation and cognitive stimulation therapy.

Finishing Touches

An artist gives finishing touches to an idol of Goddess Durga ahead of Dasara, in Dhoolpet on Saturday. — Photo: Surya Sridhar

Passenger traffic booms on Hyderabad-Delhi, Mumbai routes

CIUTY BUREAU
Hyderabad

Air travel between Hyderabad and India's major metros, Delhi and Mumbai, has seen a sharp rise this year, with passenger traffic growing steadily month-on-month, according to provisional statistics released by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

From January to August 2024, these routes have consistently ranked as the most popular, with thousands of Hyderabadis travelling between the cities. According to DGCA data, 1,36,422 passengers flew from Hyderabad to Delhi in August 2024, while 1,09,924 passengers travelled on the Hyderabad-Mumbai route. The August figures are part of a broader trend showing consistent passenger growth throughout the year, with the Hyderabad-Delhi route seeing higher passenger traffic each month.

In July, 1,45,674 passengers flew from Hyderabad to Delhi, compared to 95,689 passengers to Mumbai. June witnessed similar trends, with 1,43,661 people travelling to Delhi and 94,337 to Mumbai.

The month of Mavy saw a spike in travel with 1,46,131 passengers to Delhi and 1,01,900 to Mumbai. April marked a slight dip, with 1,23,479 passengers flying to Delhi and 99,889 to Mumbai.

The pattern of Delhi surpassing Mumbai in passenger numbers is evident as early as March, when 1,36,046 people flew to Delhi, compared to 95,517 on the Hyderabad-Mumbai route. In the earlier months of the year, February had 1,27,583 passengers flying from Hyderabad to Delhi, while 97,310 passengers travelled to Mumbai. January saw 1,25,954 passengers to Delhi and 1,08,612 to Mumbai, setting the stage for a year of high travel demand on these routes.

As the demand for air travel soars, Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) is undergoing a major expansion to accommodate the growing passenger flow. Currently, the airport's capacity stands at 12 million passengers annually, but it is being expanded to handle 34 million passengers in the near future. The airport's maximum capacity is projected to reach 80 million.

Complex knee surgery performed

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

The surgeons at Care Hospitals, Malakpet, have given a new lease of life to a 65-year-old-patient, who endured pain following a knee replacement surgery for over a decade due to a rare antibiotic-resistant infection. After suffering the pain for over a decade, the patient ended up at Care Hospitals where the team, led by Dr. Repakula Kartheek identified an antibiotic-resistant infection around his knee replacement.

The medical team immediately performed a two-stage revision surgery, starting with the removal of the infected implant and inserting antibiotic spacers to manage the infection. After weeks of targeted antibiotics and careful monitoring, the second stage of the surgery i.e., replacing the damaged femur with a custom implant designed to ensure both stability and infection control, was performed.

"Treating antibiotic-resistant infections is incredibly complex and our goal was not only to control the infection but also to restore his mobility and improve his quality of life. Within weeks, the patient was walking with support and is now on the road to full recovery," Dr Kartheek said.

Promote research: Union Minister

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

Union Minister of State for Education Dr Sukanta Majumdar on Saturday suggested that Hyderabad-based English and Foreign Languages University can offer courses in emerging areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and scientific publishing, and link them to the existing programmes being offered at the university.

Calling upon university administrators to promote research in futuristic areas and train students to be entrepreneurs, Dr. Majumdar said, "Our educational programmes need to focus on improving the employability skills of the students and for that universities need to come up with a revamped curricular framework."

Inaugurating the 'Safai Mitra Suraksha Shivir', a dignity campaign arranged for the Safai Mitras in EFLU campus, the union Minister honoured the sanitation workers as part of the 'Swachhata Hi Seva' 4.0 campaign at the university's sports complex-cum-auditorium, where he distributed sanitation kits to 60 Safai Mitras.

Continuation
from page 1

'No place for bulldozer action'

Harish assured the families, who are in a state of panic due to the looming threat of demolition, that a delegation of BRS MLAs would visit on Sunday the houses, colonies and localities marked for demolition. He emphasised that the BRS legal team would provide round-the-clock support to these families from Telangana Bhavan. He criticised the government for demolishing homes without serving any notices, contrasting this with the extended time of 45 days given to the Chief Minister's brother for demolition of a house owned by him in the buffer zone of Durgam Cheruvu in the city. He highlighted the tragic cases of Buchavva, a woman who died by suicide after her house was demolished, and another woman, who died of a heart attack due to the stress caused by the demolition drive. He labelled these deaths as "murders" committed by the Revanth Reddy government.

Now, building permits delayed

This apart, officials with whom the applications were pending for more than the stipulated time were liable for punishment, including penalty. It is learnt that over 500 applications (which have been pending for over 21 days) are yet to be processed under TG-bPASS.

Admitting the delay in permissions, Praneeth Group managing director Narendra Kumar Kamaraju said there were multiple reasons. Approvals and No Objection Certificates (NOC) had to be obtained from multiple departments, including irrigation, revenue, environmental committee and others. Now, after HYDRAA came into vogue, all the NOCs obtained in the past were being checked and processed. To avoid this inordinate delay, the State government has to establish a procedure under a system. There was no issue to secure fire, air, environmental, electricity, Water Board approvals etc. But there has to be a proper way to follow for getting the applications processed, he said. "It is only procedural and system-oriented changes fixation that we are expecting from the government," said Narendra Kumar.

Echoing similar opinion, IRA Realty founder and managing director Narsi Reddy said obtaining permissions for bigger projects was getting challenging for reasons unknown. In the last few months, very few permissions for bigger projects were approved, he said.The government should make things convenient for applicants and not make them run from one department to other. Like in the past, a single-window system should be operated and applications should be processed transparently without any delay, he added.

Apart from procedural delays, there was a lack of coordination among officials. Recently, many of them, especially from the planning and other sections have been transferred and there was a delay in handing over the DPMS digital keys for processing the applications. Further, many applications, which were approved in the past, and issue of proceedings were pending due to elections. A few officials were now insisting that applications had to be checked again for 'obvious' reasons.

Want gym bod? Steer clear...

Abuse of Mephentermine Sulphate injections can result in various adverse effects, including psychosis, cardiovascular disorders and development of tolerance and dependence over time, he added.

The illegal stocking and sale of cardiac stimulant drugs for abuse in gyms, particularly for bodybuilding, constitutes a violation of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act. Individuals involved may face imprisonment for up to five years.

'We are not encroachers'

PEOPLE THRONG TELANGANA BHAVAN SEEKING BRS SUPPORT AGAINST THE DEMOLITION DRIVE LINKED TO MUSI BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT

STATE BUREAU
HYDERABAD

Hundreds gathered at the Telangana Bhavan on Saturday to voice their concerns over the ongoing demolition drive linked to the Musi riverfront beautification project. The crowd, which began assembling as early as 7 am, included families from various affected areas.

Among the protesters was a woman from Gandipet, struggling to hold back her tears as she shared her story with BRS leaders.

"We built our house 27 years ago, and we are not within the Full Tank Level (FTL) limits of the lake. Now they say we are part of the buffer zone, which is something unheard of by many families like ours. We are not encroachers, we have all the legal documentation and registration formalities," she said.

She recounted how the sudden threat of demolition has left her family sleepless for weeks despite having taken loans and repaid them with hard-earned money. "We feel crushed by this cruel fate. Why must we experience this? We built our house with honesty, and now we are being thrown out on the streets," she lamented.

Another protester from Hydershah village, a person with a disability, expressed his anguish. "I do not know how long I can continue to work to support my family. We have all the necessary approvals cleared by the bank's technical and legal teams. We availed housing loan from SBI, believing in their thorough process. Now, the government accuses us of building in the buffer zone. Why should we pay the price for a system failure?" he questioned.

He pleaded with the government to regularise their homes by imposing penalties rather than depriving them of shelter. "We are not against the government. We touch your feet, save us," he implored.

Women, who gathered at the Telangana Bhavan to voice their concerns, in tears on Saturday.

In Brief

HYDERABAD
Unaccounted money seized

The Sultan Bazaar police on Friday night seized Rs 50 lakh unaccounted money from a businessman at Boggulkunta road. According to Sultan Bazaar Inspector, S Srinivasa Chary, during vehicle checking, the police stopped one Amit Sirwani who was riding a scooter and found a jute bag. On checking the bag, the police found Rs 50 lakh cash. "Amit failed to show any documents to prove the legality of the amount," Srinivasa Chary said.

HYDERABAD
e-bike catches fire

An e-bike burst into flames at Suraram of Jeedimetla in the city on Saturday. According to reports, the e-bike was parked near a medical store on Suraram road when a fire broke out in the vehicle. Before a fire engine could reach the spot, the fire spread to the medical store partially burning the articles kept in the front portion of the store. Officials suspect the fire broke out due to a short circuit in the battery.

Allotment of 2BHKs to Musi oustees opposed

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

Even as the State government started shifting families living in tiny sheds on the Musi riverbed to the government's 2BHK houses in Chanchalguda and other areas, the actual beneficiaries of the double-bedroom houses are getting worried as they fear that they may lose the houses promised to them and are now questioning the move of the government.

About 284 houses were constructed in Pilligudiselu near Chanchalguda, of which 142 were distributed among beneficiaries while the remaining 142 were vacant. On Friday, officials handed over documents of 2BHK houses located at Chanchalguda and Jiyaguda government sites to 20 families residing on the Musi riverbed.

As the news spread that the government was allotting the vacant houses to Musi project oustees, several beneficiaries reached the 2BHK sites and started enquiring about their fate. Beneficiaries from Jiyaguda and other locations where 2BHK houses were constructed by the previous government are worried as the Congress government announced that it will be providing houses to over 15,000 families being displaced from the Musi riverbed.

They argued that the authorities handed over 68,841 2BHKs to beneficiaries in the GHMC limits, and about 31,000 were under various stages of construction. If the government hands over 15,000 houses to families being displaced from the Musi riverbed, then a large number of people who were waiting for these houses are likely to be left out.

The beneficiaries claimed that they got the houses after scrutiny of their applications and lottery and that if the government tried to give their houses to people being displaced from the Musi riverbed, they would not remain silent.

Already beneficiaries have started staging protests against the government's move. On Friday, beneficiaries staged a protest at Uppal and on Saturday a large number of them gathered at Jubilee Hills, Rahmat Nagar, Kamala Nagar and Bahadurpura 2BHK sites and demanded the government not to allot their houses to the Musi project oustees. Recently, applicants for 2BHK houses from different parts of the city met at Sundarayya Vignana Kendram, Baghlingampally and demanded that the government allocate them the houses.

HYDRAA claimed 3 lives so far: BRS

HYDERABAD: A BRS team led by party MLAs T Harish Rao, P Sabitha Indra Reddy and Krishna Rao was not allowed to visit the body of Buchamma, who was called the first victim of the HYDRAA demolition drive.

She died, allegedly by suicide in the wake of threats, reportedly from HYDRAA, to demolish her house in the vicinity of Nallacheruvu in Kukatpally constituency.

The team visited Gandhi Hospital to see her body, but the police declined permission and refused to share any information pertaining to her postmortem. This led to heated arguments between the police and the BRS delegation. They called it a murder committed by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and questioned how many more lives he wanted to take in the name of HYDRAA. They claimed that three people had died by suicide so far due to HYDRAA's actions.

Harish Rao said an action plan would be announced soon to fight the demolition of the houses of the poor after taking all the party MLAs in the city limits. The previous Congress and Telugu Desam governments gave permission for construction. Who gave Revanth Reddy the authority to demolish homes that have been established for 30 years? he asked.

According to the Land Acquisition Act, 2013, if the poor were evicted, they should be compensated, and a new house should be built. The Act, brought by the Congress government, states that Rs 5 lakh will be given as a living allowance. But there is no such move to support the displaced, he said.

CATASTROPHIC EFFECT

My family members fought in the Kargil war and defended the Parliament House. We were attracted to Hyderabad by its reputation, hoping for a peaceful life. But the threat of demolition has had a catastrophic effect on us. We have all the legal documents, and yet we are being treated as encroachers. How legally approved house could now be deemed illegal?

ANITHA
WIFE OF AN ARMY JAWAN

LIVES OF PEOPLE WRECKED

Right from Vikarabad to the point where Musi joins Krishna, you have a long stretch to develop for tourism and other infrastructure. There is a lot of space to develop and promote. Over 90 per cent of the sewage water joining Musi is being treated today. Why are the lives of people in the heart of the city being wrecked in the name of the Musi River project? Gujarat's Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel statue of unity is placed away from the din and bustle of the cities

MOHAMMAD AYUB,
VISHAL NAGAR

Why Revanth obsessed with Musi project, asks KTR

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

BRS working president KT Rama Rao raised serious questions about the Congress government's Musi riverfront beautification project, highlighting the wildly varying claims regarding its estimated cost. He pointed out that the estimated cost had escalated dramatically from Rs 50,000 crore initially, to Rs 70,000 crore, and now to a staggering Rs 1.5 lakh crore.

Rama Rao contrasted this with the Kaleshwaram project, which was implemented with Rs 80,000 crore and significantly transformed the agrarian profile of the State, benefiting the farming community. He noted that such a crucial project underwent rigorous scrutiny because of the Congress-sponsored debates from local to national levels.

The Congress has now proposed the Musi beautification project, setting aside earlier plans and inflating the estimated cost to Rs 1.5 lakh crore. Rama Rao questioned the practicality and benefits of the project, asking how many farmers would benefit from the project? What would be its gross storage capacity? How much area would be supported with irrigation benefits? How many acres would be coming under cultivation? What would be the yield of growing crops? To what extent would it help meet the industrial needs and how many new reservoirs would be built as part of the project?

He also questioned the Chief Minister's obsession with the Musi beautification project, especially when the Palamuru-Ranga Reddy Lift Irrigation project was in its final stages of completion. Rama Rao said the Congress was greedy, citing the varying cost estimates as proof. He warned that the people of the State were wary of plans to siphon off crores of rupees through backdoor methods before even starting the project works. Rama Rao also warned the Congress government that it would incur the ire of the people for its greed.

HOW TO REPAY LOANS?

I am from a different State. Having married a person here, I landed here and loved the environment and peaceful living in Hyderabad. Ten years ago, we bought the house. We have to pay the EMI till 2035. The bank says irrespective of the fate of the house, we need to repay the loans. We have to. I have small children

SRIDEVI

STIGMA HAUNTING US

We have been living in the city since childhood. We bought a house with a loan of Rs 88 lakh. Now, all of a sudden, you descend on us with the claim that we are encroachers. Being labelled as encroachers, 'Akramanadarulu,' is more hurting. It is a stigma haunting us. Every approval given to us is legally accorded by the government. How can you brand us as encroachers? Even if we save our property from demolition, it would not have any buyer in the future. We cannot dispose of it even to meet emergency needs. What is our fate and what is our future?

WOMAN FROM DREAM HOMES, HYDERSHAH VILLAGE

'WE SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT, BUT NOT THIS WAY'

I lived in the UK for 10 years. I have seen how things work there and understand how London and its administration function. I came to India in the hope of a better life, to bring more opportunities to India, and to create employment for the jobless. I am the MD of an IT company here. HYDRAA was asking whether we did due diligence to construct the house. Do they think that over 10,000 people sitting here do not do their diligence? I have a double masters. If the standards change over the years, should the common man suffer? We are for development and support. Hyderabad has got some image. We will support the development agenda, but not this way. You are destroying our houses and families. A middle-class family is being reduced further to a lower-middle-class status. Is that development? I am questioning Rahul Gandhi also. How do you expect to win in Maharashtra and Haryana now after playing havoc with the lives in Telangana? What kind of law are you following? Where is the transparency? We are going to take the message across the States.

— Kamal Kishore Naidu

AR constable shoots himself dead

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

An armed reserve constable of Rachakonda Police died by suicide at the Ranga Reddy District Collector office, Adibatla, in the early hours of Saturday. The victim, identified as D Balakrishna Goud (28), was working at the RR District Collectorate complex in the guard section.

On Friday night, Balakrishna Goud reported for duty and after completing his shift, at around 3 am, he went to the washroom and shot himself in the head using his service rifle. On hearing the sound, other constables rushed to the spot and found Balakrishna lying in a pool of blood. "Balakrishna was having some personal issues and slipped into depression over it. Previously also, he tried to end his life. A case was registered and we are trying to ascertain the exact cause that prompted him to take the extreme step," said ACP Ibrahimpatnam, K Raju. The body of the constable was shifted to the OGH mortuary.

> We are trying to ascertain the exact cause that prompted him to take the extreme step, say police officials

Govt firm on demolitions, but says no forceful evictions

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

Unmoved by the agony of the people facing an uncertain future with the State government firm on demolishing their homes on the banks of River Musi, the two officials at the helm of the demolition drive on Saturday, however, claimed there would be no forceful evictions. In fact, they claimed that many families had already agreed to shift to double-bedroom houses constructed in different areas across the city.

Musi Riverfront Development Corporation officials conducted a drone survey and identified 10,600 houses and structures along the 55 km stretch. These structures were in the riverbed and buffer zone limits and had to be relocated. However, not a single family would be evicted forcefully, and all oustees would be provided 2BHKs, which were worth Rs 25 lakh to Rs 30 lakh, MA&UD Principal Secretary Dana Kishore said

Accompanied by HYDRAA commissioner AV Ranganath, Dana Kishore said officials had surveyed 974 houses in different areas along the river stretch over the last two days. Of these, 576 houses were on the riverbed limits and families in 406 houses were ready to relocate, he said.

"Already, 50 families have been shifted to different areas, and another 150 families are being shifted today. The government is arranging packing and transportation as well," Dana Kishore said, adding that 15,000 2BHKs were identified in different areas for providing them to Musi riverbed oustees. Help desks would be established in different areas for oustees to get ration cards, Aadhaar cards and LPG connections. This apart, support of NGOs, Prof Haragopal and Prof Kodandaram was being taken to convince them for relocation, he maintained.

Rs 10,000 cr for project

The MAUD Principal Secretary said the Chief Minister issued directions to ensure freshwater flows in River Musi by June 2026, and Rs 10,000 crore was approved for the project. Of this, Rs 3,800 crore would be spent for establishing STPs with 970 MLD capacity. Five TMC of River Godavari would be diverted into Osman Sagar and Himayat Sagar, and 10 TMC water would be for meeting drinking water requirements of the west zone, besides constructing check dams at different locations in the river, he explained.

Efforts for preparing an aggregate master plan for River Musi was under progress, and the agency would submit one preliminary DPR in four months. Tenders would be floated in a week, and once the tenders were finalised, works would commence in a few months, he added.

Meanwhile, Ranganath reiterated that structures that lacked permission from local bodies were being demolished only after issuing prior intimation to the occupants. Calling Kukatpally resident Buchamma's suicide unfortunate, he said HYDRAA would not touch houses owned by poor and middle income groups.

Many house owners claimed they secured permissions from panchayats and other local bodies but in many cases, those permissions were cancelled in the past, he claimed and said HYDRAA was being projected as a ghost. On the selective demolitions, he said: "We are doing our homework and will take action after completing all formalities. No influential person will be spared. Janwada farmhouse does not come under our purview, and it falls under GO 111."

Contradictory versions

Interestingly, while Ranganath said in case if any structure was found in the FTL or buffer zone of a water body or on government land and permissions were issued in the past, such permissions would be revoked. Dana Kishore, however, immediately intervened and said all permissions issued in the past by different local bodies would be honoured and they would be valid.

Study tour for MLAs

The State government is arranging for a tour in October to study riverfront development projects in Seoul and other places for city MLAs, especially in whose constituency the River Musi flows.

In Brief

HYDERABAD

Man held with 7 pistols

The Rachakonda SOT caught a man who was allegedly in possession of country-made weapons. The police seized seven weapons and 11 live rounds from him. B Sai Ram Reddy, a native of Andhra Pradesh and residing at Suraram purchased the seven weapons, including a pistol, a revolver, a tapancha and four air pistols along with 11 live rounds.

HYDERABAD

Sound pollution

The Cyberabad Police booked cases against 17 pubs and other amusement places in Hyderabad for sound pollution and not obtaining licences for entertainment. Teams of the Cyberabad Police, along with the pollution control board officials, checked the premises of pubs and amusement places on Friday night.

Rains likely to make a comeback today

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

After a lull, rains are expected to make a comeback in Hyderabad, with weather forecasts predicting increased rainfall activity over the next 48 to 72 hours.

The city is likely to witness significant downpours starting from Sunday, bringing relief to parts of the city that experienced dry conditions. According to the Weather Research and Forecasting (WRF) model maps on Telangana Development Planning Society, rainfall intensity is set to increase, particularly on Sunday. The eastern parts of the city, including Secunderabad and Alwal, are likely to experience heavy showers.

Meanwhile, central and western regions like Serilingampally and Quthbullapur are expected to see lighter rainfall. Meteorologists have warned that the city's humidity levels will remain high despite the rain. Maximum daytime temperatures are expected to hover slightly above 30 degrees Celsius.

Bharat Biotech to revive stepwells

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

Bharat Biotech in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), Telangana and SAHE (The Society for Advancement of Human Endeavor) will rejuvenate and architecturally restore the historic stepwells at Ammapalli temple and Salar Jung Museum, as part of its CSR initiative.

By restoring these stepwells, Bharat Biotech aims to preserve cultural heritage, promote water conservation, and improve lives and livelihoods by boosting eco-heritage tourism in Telangana, a press release said.

"We are supporting a far-reaching cause to breathe new life into these vital, ancient stepwells, inspiring community to engage with its rich heritage and promoting sustainable water management," Bharat Biotech MD Suchitra Ella said.

To further the cause, Bharat Biotech is collaborating with CII to promote environmental sustainability, preserve cultural heritage, and support eco-heritage tourism. "The partnership signifies a shared dedication to not only restore these stepwells of Ammapalli Temple and Salar Jung Museum but also to educate public," she added.

Rs 826 crore for projects near KBR

Grade separators to come up at six major junctions around park

CITY BUREAU
HYDERABAD

The State government on Saturday sanctioned projects worth Rs 826 crore for construction of grade separators at six major junctions around Kasu Brahmananda Reddy (KBR) Park, which eventually will ensure traffic at these signals flow in an uninterrupted manner.

Dubbed as HCITI Junction Improvement initiative, GHMC has identified six major junctions in the periphery of KBR Park. The traffic flow is very high across these junctions with roads connecting to software companies located at Madhapur, Hitec City, Gachibowli and Kondapur. At present, these junctions are operated with traffic signals and U-turns, GHMC officials said. Considering the importance of these junctions, grade separators have been proposed at six junctions around the park in two packages with a total cost of Rs 826 crore, GHMC said.

"The junctions have been designed to ensure that the entire area will be conflict-free i.e., there will be no signal anywhere around KBR Park and traffic can flow in an uninterrupted manner. Traffic going clockwise will travel in a series of underpasses while traffic going counter clockwise will flow through a series of flyovers. The GHMC has also incorporated designs of rainwater retention structures under the underpasses to make sure that these places do not become bottlenecks during monsoon," a press release said.

Streamlining traffic

PACKAGE-I (RS 421 CR)

JUBILEE HILLS CHECKPOST:
- Y-shaped underpass from Road no-45 to KBR Park and Yousufguda
- 4-lane flyover from KBR Park entrance junction towards Road no 36
- 2-lane flyover from Yousufguda side towards Road no 45 junction

KBR ENTRANCE AND MUGDHA JUNCTION:
- 2-lane underpass from Jubilee Hills checkpost towards Cancer Hospital junction
- 3-lane unidirectional from Punjagutta side towards Jubilee Hills checkpost
- 3-lane underpass from KBR entrance junction towards Punjagutta

PACKAGE-II (RS 405 CR)

ROAD NO 45 JUNCTION:
- 2-lane underpass from Film Nagar junction towards Jubilee Hills checkpost
- 2-lane flyover from Jubilee Hills checkpost towards Road no 45

FILM NAGAR JUNCTION:
- 2-lane underpass from Maharaja Agrasen junction towards Road no 45 junction
- 2-lane flyover from Film Nagar junction towards Maharaja Agrasen junction

MAHARAJA AGRASEN JUNCTION:
- 2-lane underpass from Cancer Hospital junction towards Film Nagar junction
- 2-lane flyover from Film Nagar junction towards Road No. 12

CANCER HOSPITAL JUNCTION:
- 2-lane underpass from KBR Park side towards Maharaja Agrasen junction
- 2-lane flyover from Maharaja Agrasen junction towards Road No.10

Centre eases rice export curbs

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

The paddy farmers in State have at least one reason to cheer as the Centre has relaxed restrictions on rice exports on Saturday.

The government removed the blanket ban on overseas shipments of non-basmati white rice and imposed a minimum export price of $490 per tonne. Additionally, authorities cut the tax on overseas sale of parboiled rice to 10% from 20% with immediate effect. Since the ban on the export of non-basmati white rice came into effect on July 20, 2023, paddy farmers faced significant challenges. Private players, especially potential rice exporters, stayed away from purchasing, leaving farmers reliant mainly on government agencies for procurement at MSP. Despite this, many farmers struggled to secure a fair deal. The export ban also led to piling up of stocks in the State with the State Civil Supplies Corporation holding a major chunk of it.

The relaxation is expected to ensure remunerative prices for farmers. With the Kharif harvest in the State projected to be over 150 lakh tonnes, a significant shift in paddy cultivation is anticipated. With this move, India has eased restrictions on some rice exports, which may ease global prices and signal a shift in domestic agricultural policies.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, P B KRISHNA MURTHY S/o. PAPPULA BALAIAH. R/o. 12-14-201, VINOBHA NAGAR, LALAPET, SECUNDERABAD - 500017, TS, INDIA. Changed my Name from PUPUA BALAIAH KRISHNA MURTHY to **P B KRISHNA MURTHY** [TT-TNK]

I, SHAIK BURHANUDDIN S/o Shaik Khaja Miya, R/O 11-1-1165, Mallepally, Hyd Passport Bearing No. J6330499, hereby Change My Name From SHAIK BURHANUDDIN to **SHAIK BURHAN** for all future purposes. [TT-8313]

I, Govind Rao R/o. H.No. 8-1-1/10/376/C, Mailardevpally, Rangareddy. Telangana changed my name to **Govind Devne.** [TT-47520]

I, Maniyar Manisha Hasmukhlal, W/o. Bharat Ruparel, R/o. H.no. 4-1-1233, Fno-204, Subodhya Apts, Bogulkunta, Nampally, HYD, TS Changed My Name as **Manisha Ruparel.** [TT-8371]

I, Lubna Firdous, W/o. Mohammed Abdul Bari, R/o. H.no. 8-1-402/370, Gulshan cly, 7 Tombs, Shaikpet, HYD, TS Changed My Minor Daughter Name from Hajira Begum To **Hajera Firdous.** [TT-8371]

I, SUDHA KUMARI KONDAVATI R/o. 35-79/13, PNo.57, Balaji Nagar Brindavan Cly, Sainikpuri Neredmet X Rd, RCK-Medchal TS Changed My Name to **SUDHA RANI BANDLA** W/o. Bandla Lakshmi Penchala Rao [TT-8372]

I, JAYANTHI SREE SUDHA W/o. JAYANTHI LAKSHMI PRASANNA RAMANA NARASIMHAM R/o. 16-11-20/13/4, Saleem Nagar Malakpet, Hyd 500036, TS, Changed My Name to **JAYANTHI NARASIMHAM SREE SUDHA** [TT-8372]

I, KASHISH R/o. 20-7-184/185/4, HIMMATPURA, QAZIPURA, CHARMINAR, HYD -500065. TG Changed My Name to **KASHISH AZIZ** W/o. ABDUL AZIZ. [TT-8372]

I, SIGA KRISHNA, S/o. Siga Yellaiah, R/o. H.No. 1-73, Malkapur (V) Choutuppal (M), Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri Dist, T.G., in my Passport No. P5054613 My mother name entered as SHIGA LAKHUMBAI, but my mother Actual name is SIGA BAYAMMA. The both names ie. **SHIGA LAKHUMBAI** & **SIGA BAYAMMA** is one & same only [TT-8371]

I, SHANTILAL SIDDHARTHA JAIN, R/o. 6-5-405, NEW BHOIGUDA, SEC' BAD-500003. TG Changed My Name to **SHANTILAL SIDDHARTH JAIN** S/o. PARASMAL SHANTILAL JAIN. [TT-8372]

I, ABIDA BEGUM W/o. MIYA KHAN, R/o: 16-11-425, Moosarambagh, Malakpet, Hyderabad-36, TS., Changed My New Name As **SHARIF UNNISA** W/o. MIYA KHAN, Bearing Passort No : C1959874. [TT-8373]

I, SYED SHAHA MAHAMOOD SARMAST S/o Syed Shaha Altaf Rasool R/o: 18-8-239/30/1, Riyasath Nagar, Saidabad, Hyderabad. Has Changed My Name as **SYED SHA MAHMOOD SARMAST** [TT-8373]

I, Kancherla Naga Satya Surya Konda Venkata Narasimha Murty S/o. Subba Rao, R/o. H.no: 8-96, Old court street, Mummidivaram (v) & (M) Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Konaseema Dist, A.P, I have changed my name to **NSSKV Narsimha Murthy Kancherla** for all future purposes [TT-8373]

I, MOHAMMED NAYEEM F/o. UMME SULEAM, R/o. H.No: 2-2-70/404, PRAJAY AVENUE APARTMENT, PHASE-1, AMBERPET MAIN ROAD, HYDERABAD. (TS) CHANGED MY CHILD NAME **UMME SULAIM,** D/o. MOHAMMED NAYEEM [TT-8373]

LOST

I, NALABOLU PAPA RAO S/o BHASKARA RAO R/o. H.no: 1-9-5/2 Sri Venkateshwar Nilayam, Kushaiguda, Kapra Mandal, Medchal - Malkajgiri Dist, Telangana. Have Lost My Original Sale Deeds Document no: 11069/2006, SRO Kukatpally. And Document no: 5752/2022 SRO Balanagar. While Traveling near Gulf Bakery Bowenpally to Secunderabad. If anybody found please **call. 9032022298.** [TT-TNK]

CH.VASANTH KUMAR S/o. CH. VENKATESWAR RAO R/o. RAJENDRA NAGAR, RR DIST, TG. HAVE LOST ORIGINAL PROPERTY DOCUMENT BEARING NO 6931/1981. Behalf of CH VASANTH KUMAR I MOHAMMED AHAD ALIYAL ZEESHAN S/o. ZEHAD ALI REQUESTING TO PLEASE CALL AND **CONTACT 9553990585** IF ANYBODY FOUND. [TT-8267]

I, Krishna Ravulakollu, S/o. Ravulakollu Buddaiah, R/o. 9-1-238, Ramdaspura, Opp Darga, Langer House, Hyd, TS. lost my original ppt. U9799582, issue, 23-4-2021, exp, 22-4-2031, at HYD, while travelling from Langerhouse to Bapughat, if anybody found **7387375707.** [TT-8371]

I, Malkapuram Venkateshwarlu S/o Malkapuram Ramulu, H.no: Plot No-129, BDL Colony, Bhagyalatha, Vansthalipuram, Hayathnagar, R.R Dist-70. lost my Original Passport No. G9364648 While Travelling at Chaitanyapuri. If Anyone Found Pls **call: 9502417421** [TT-8371]

I, GANDHAM SITA RAMA BHUSHAN S/o. GANDHAM SATYANARAYANA RAO, R/o: Flat No.401 Sree Lakshmi Residency, V N Reddy Nagar, Kushaiguda, Kapra, M- M.Dist-62, TG. lost my Original Passport Be No.E5931228, while I was travelling from Vizag to Hyderabad on 15/06/2022. if Found Pl **Cont: 9491806548** [TT-8371]

I, PARGA JOHN SUNIL, S/o. PARIGE BHAGAWAN DAS, R/o. P.No. 1-3-183/40/46/13, Gandhi Nagar, Musheerabad Hyd-500080, T.S. I have lost my Original passport Bearing No. F5544341, VIDE FILE No. HYDE027868/2005, Date. 17-11-2005, Place issue Hyd, Validity 17-11-2005 to 16-11-2015, while travelling from Care Hospital Musheerabad to My Medical shop at Musheerabad, if anybody Found pls **Contact - 8247459960** [TT-8372]

I, AKUNURU RATNA RAJA SHEKAR S/o. AKUNURU MALLIKARJUNA RAO, R/o. FNo. 608, BLOCK-B8, SAHABHAVANA TOWNSHIP, NAGOLE, R.R TS. I Have Lost My Passport While Shifting House HOLD ARTICLES From Mansoorabad to NAGOLE Bearing NO. P8829811 Dt. 28-03-2017 AT HYD, if anybody Found pls **Contact - 8106767889.** [TT-8372]

I, Dupati. Satyanarayana Raju S/o Late D. Rama Raju R/o Plot No. 95/S, H.No. 4-89/3, Midhani colony, Road no-5, Injapur village, Turkayamjal, Abdullapurmet mandal, R.R.Dist, TG , Lost my Original Sale Deed link Document No. 3483/1997, SRO. Pedda amberpet while travelling if found please **contact: 9492031028** [TT-11579]

I, Mohammed Ali Abbas S/o Mohammed Shamshad Ali, R/o H.no.7-43, street no.3 K.K.nagar, phase -1, gandhamguda (V) gandipet (M) R.R.Dist I lost my Original Passport no N7595721,While Travelling from Bandlaguda Jagir to Hydershakote, anyone found plz **cont: 9398033342.** [TT-8373]

I, Mubeen Shareef S/o Mahmood Shareef R/o 9-4-134/64 flat no:501 Aruna colony tolichowki shaikpet holding indian passport no : P5748503 lost while shifting my house from Golconda to tolichowki Aruna colony if anyone found may **cont: 9885181384** [TT-8373]

I, MOHD. YOUSUF SHAREEF S/o. Late. Mohd Hassan Shareef R/o. 10-3-14/406/A, Okaz Complex, Humayun Nagar, Hyd., T.G., have lost my original Sale Deed Doc No.4283/1989, of Property Bearing No.5-7-157, 360/A, 190.40 Sq.yds., situated at Nampally, Hyd., T.G., while paint in 22-09-2024. **Ph: 9247857769** [TT-8373]

I, BOYIDI RAMANI DEVI, W/o. Late BOYIDI RAMA MOHAN RAO, R/o. Flat No:- 203, Karuna Residency 12/1, Abhyudaya Nagar Colony, Kismatpur, Gandipet (M), R.R Dist, T.S-86. have lost my Original Sale Deed Doctument no: 1736. /1988 S.R.O. Eluru. While traveling from Kismatpur to Narsingi. if Anyone Found Pls **Cont: 6303347008** [TT-8373]

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Syed Taffazul Ahmed S/o. Syed Maqbool Ahmed, R/o: Sy. No. 18/3/P Flat No. 502, A Block Sara Homes, Upperpally, VTC: Rajendra nagar, PO: Hyderguda, District: K.v. Ranga reddy, State: Telangana, PIN Code: 500048, Changed my Name to **Syed Tafazul Ahmed.**

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Man held for rape

ASIFABAD: A 28-year-old man was arrested for allegedly raping a minor girl at Buruguguda village on Saturday. Asifabad Inspector G Satish said Bommena Sagar from Buruguguda was apprehended for raping the minor girl on the pretext of marrying her.

GENERAL PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby informed that My Client **GANTI KASI VISWANATH SHARMA S/o, G.VENKATA RAO** purchase to in respect of All that the Flat bearing no. G2, House bearing no. 12-2-68/G2 (PTIN No. 1231202199) on Ground floor of "Bali Reddy Bhavan" on plot no. 7 part, having a built up area of 1450 sq feet (Including common area and two car parking slots) along with an undivided share of land admeasuring 60 sq yards (out of 1416 sq yards)., in survey no. 17 and 18 situated at J.P. Nagar, Moosapet Village, Balanagar Mandal under GHMC Kukatpally Circle, Medchal - Malkajgiri District,

who has purchased from its owner and possessor Basani Joseph Reddy rep by DAGPA holder M/s. S.N.G. Construction rep by its Managing partner S.Satish Reddy , through Reg. DAGPA No. 12294/2015 , dated: 10.09.2015, Reg. at SRO, Rangareddy and the Original Link Document **Reg. Sale Deeds (1) 842/2020** dated: 07.03.2020, Reg at SRO. Balanagar., were misplaced, lost and lodged a police complaint before SHO PS KPHB No. 15202307241833195138 on 23.07.2024.

If any Individual Banks & Financial Institution public or Private, any Government or its agencies having rights, claim mortgages, Court cases etc., are having over the said property may contact the undersigned with all Original relevent Documents within a period of 15 days (Fifteen Days) from the date of publication of this Notice falling which my client will proceed as per law and provide Housing Loan. The Objections raised after due date will not be entertained and my client is not responsible.

Date : 28.09.2024
Place : Nizampet, JNTU, Hyderabad,
By
Sd/- **A.JYOTHI**
MBA, L.L.M.
Advocate
Office & Residence
H.No.: 16-2-323(2-13/31) S.S.Colony, Near Vasanthnagar Colony, (JNTU)
Cell No: 7993833944

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public are hereby informed that my client Sri SHAIK ABDUL MAZEED, S/o. Shaik Dastagiri, aged about 59 years, Occ: Self Employee, R/o. H.No. 16-115/3/7, Road No.11, Vandanapuri Colony, Beeramguda, Sangareddy District, State of Telangana-502032, India, has wished to purchase the property i.e., the Flat No.401 (Land Owner share) in the Fourth Floor, Having plinth area 1410 Sq. Ft (including common area and one car parking area) along with un divided share of land admeasuring 53.40 Sq. yards of land (out of 650 sq yards), constructed on Plot No. 366/Part & 367, Survey No.831/A, Building known as "N.V.N Residency" Roof covered with RCC, situated at 'Vandanapuri Colony' of Usikebavi Ameenpur Village & Mandal, Ameenpur Municipality, Sanga reddy Dist., Telangana state and bounded by North: Open to Sky, South: Corridor & Flat No. 402 & 403, East: Balcony / Open to Sky, West: Open to Sky, from Smt. Ragulapally Swathi, which was obtained through a Regd. Supplementary Agreement vide Document No.22841/2023. dated. 27-04-2023.

If any person / persons have any right, title, interest, claim whatsoever in and over the said property, may approach the undersigned with all relevant documents within 7 days from the date of this notice or send objections in writing through registered post with all relevant documents, if my client will not receive any objection in respect of the above said property from anybody within the above stipulated time, my client shall proceed the SALE DEED in respect of the said property, later any objection shall not be entertained in any manner.

Sd/- **G.MALYADRI YADAV B.A.LBL**
Advocate & Notary
H.No: 48-348/1, Ganesh Nagar, Chital, Hyd-054.
Mob: 7799473803

BoB organises 'Sampoorna Swachhata' programme

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

On the occasion of the Swachchata Hi Seva 2024 nationwide campaign call given by the Department of Financial Services to promote cleanliness and hygiene, the Bank of Baroda, Hyderabad metro region, organised a major awareness and cleanliness drive titled 'Sampoorna Swachhata' at Padmaraonagar Park in Secunderabad.

> The event was attended by senior BOB officials, including regional head Aditya Kumar Kannaujiya

Titled Sampoorna Swachhata, the event included Shramadan and Swachhata Ki Bhaagidhari that included a special plantation drive, in which nearly 30 employees participated. The event was attended by senior BoB officials, including regional head Aditya Kumar Kannaujiya, deputy regional manager Pravakar Jhapathsingh and staff from the bank. The event also focused on spreading awareness on the importance of cleanliness and hygiene.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby informed that my client **K. NAGESHWAR RAO** Son of **LATE K. ESHWAR RAO.** Aged: 52 years, Occ: Business. R/o, H No.18-8-192/14, R/o. Indra Nagar, Phisal Banda, Hyderabad-59, T.S. While my client was going to Santosh Nagar on 22-09-2024 at 12.30 p.m. to obtain the xerox copies of the Original Sale Deed Document No 118/1977, the said document pertaining to Sub-Registrar office Azampura, Hyderabad. My Client searched the same but could not trace it out, and that my client lost the above mentioned original document which is in a polythene cover, which was standing in my client fathers name. If anybody found the same may be handed over to my client or under signed

Place: Hyderabad
Dated: 28-09-2024
Sd/- **MOHAMMED MAHBOOB**
(Advocate)
Off: # 18-8-215/A, Riyasath Nagar, Hyd-59, T.S.
Mobile No. 9393545958

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public are here by informed that my client **MOHAMMED MUZAFFAR HUSSAIN S/o. LATE MOHAMMED SHOUKATH HUSSAIN,** is entered into Agreement of Sale dated:17-04-2024, below property bearing Portion of House bearing Municipal No.1-4-881/2,Consisting with a built up area 200, Sft, R.C.C (vide its PTIN No.1090108023) 1-1-449 (Old) admeasuring 99.25 Sq.Yds., or 83.61 Sq.Mtrs., situated at Gandhi Nagar, New Bakaram, Hyderabad, Telangana State. That my client is entered Agreement Of Sale with **MEKALA NARSING RAO @ATUKULA JAGANNATHAM S/o. LATE MEKALA MUTYALOO @ATUKULA BABU RAO,** Seller father expired and his brother expired, seller and their family Members made partition through vide document no. 3088/2024, on.12-07-2024, registered at S.R.O Chikkadpally, Hyderabad, T.G., **MEKALA NARSING RAO @ATUKULA JAGANATHAM** entered Agreement of Sale to my Client to above Property. And if any have legal heirs/family members/successors above said property for any objections.

Therefore the public in general are hereby Any objections to this Notice be communicated to the under signed within (7) days from this day.

Sd/- **RAMPALLY SRINIVAS**
Advocate & Notary
H.NO:1-10-247/2/A/1, Ashok Nagar, Hyd-20,T.S. **CELL: 9396572505.**

Citizens recall 1908 Musi floods

Participants during the solidarity meet under the Great Tamarind Tree on the premises of OGH on Saturday.

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

Children from different schools, intellectuals, historians and members of various voluntary organisations from Hyderabad on Saturday recalled the devastating 1908 Musi floods on the occasion of its 116th anniversary.

To mark the 116th anniversary of the Musi floods, the Forum for a Better Hyderabad, in association with several civil society groups, organised a memorial and solidarity meet under the Great Tamarind Tree, on the premises of Osmania General Hospital on Saturday.

Forum for a Better Hyderabad Chairman Veda Kumar Manikonda in his address recounted the tragic loss of life and property during the floods, mentioning that some found refuge by climbing a tamarind tree in Afzal Park, which saved 150 people.

He praised the efforts of the Seventh Nizam of Hyderabad Deccan, in 1914, who established the City Improvement Board (CIB) to prevent future disasters of this magnitude.

Renowned engineer

Veda Kumar also recalled the contributions of renowned engineer Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya, who proposed the construction of two balancing reservoirs across the Musi. These reservoirs not only reduced the risk of flooding but also provided a sustainable drinking water supply for the city and irrigation for downstream areas, he said. Prof Anwar Khan, an activist, said the tamarind tree had saved the lives of 150 people irrespective of caste, creed and the rich.

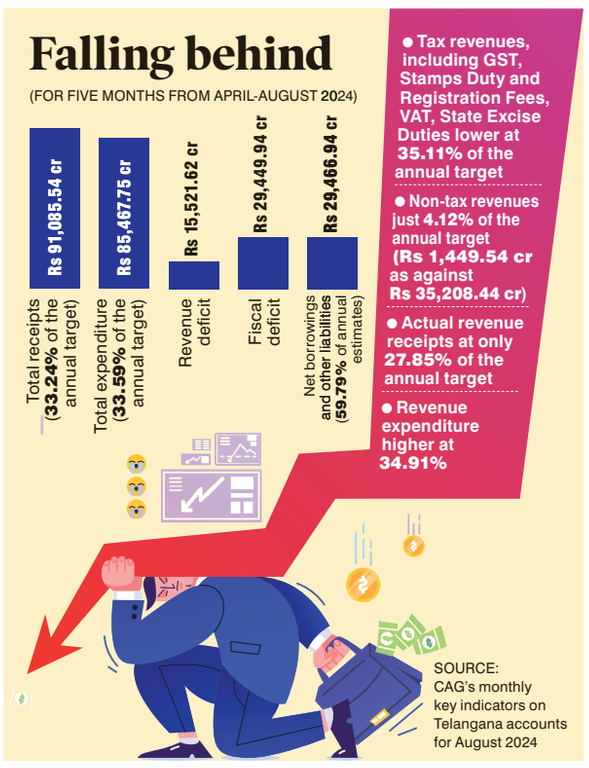
In 5 months, State finances go for a toss

HYDRAA likely to cause huge shortfall in tax revenues

STATE BUREAU
HYDERABAD

In the first five months of the current financial year 2024-25, Telangana's finances have gone for a toss, with massive revenue and fiscal deficits, stagnant revenues and expenditure. According to CAG's monthly key indicators on Telangana accounts for August 2024, the total receipts of the State worked out to Rs 91,085.54 crore and the total expenditure was Rs 85,467.75 crore for the five-month period (April-August 2024).

Revenue receipts aggregated to Rs 61,618.60 crore and capital receipts amounted to Rs 29,466.94 crore whereas revenue expenditure totaled Rs 77,140.22 crore and capital expenditure was pegged at Rs 8,327.53 crore. Revenue deficit at the end of August 2024 mounted to Rs 15,521.62 crore and fiscal deficit escalated to Rs 29,449.94 crore.



The CAG figures show that the total receipts and expenditure for the five-month period was only 33.24% and 33.59% of the annual target (Budget estimates) spelt out in the State Budget for 2024-25 presented by Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka in July 2024. The actual revenue receipts amounted to only 27.85% of the annual target while revenue expenditure was higher at 34.91%.

Similarly, capital receipts jumped to 55.79%of the target while capital expenditure was lower at 24.87%.

Tax revenues, including GST, Stamps Duty and Registration Fees, VAT, State Excise Duties and other taxes and duties, were lower at 35.11% of the annual target and the non-tax revenues were only 4.12 % of the annual target (Rs 1,449.54 crore as against Rs 35,208.44 crore). The State's share of union taxes amounted to Rs 3,316.35 crore, or 33.83% of the annual target (Rs 18,834.19 crore) and the grants-in-aid and contributions from the Central government were only 11.31% of the target (Rs 2,447.03 crore against the annual target of Rs 21,636.15 crore).

The "committed" expenditure of the State government on account of interest payments, salaries, wages and pensions of employees and expenditure on subsidy has shown a sharp increase vis-à-vis the annual estimates. Interest payments rose to Rs 10,497.52 crore (59.21% of the annual estimates), salaries and wages mounted to Rs 18,152.28 crore(45.33%), pensions soared to Rs 7,165.65 crore (61.55%) but subsidy was pegged at Rs 5,398.86 crore (33.24% of the annual estimate). The State's net borrowings and other liabilities rose to Rs 29,466.94 crore (that is, 59.79%of the annual estimates), thereby contributing sharply to the State's mounting public debt.

If the State's net borrowings of Rs 11,438.04 crore in the last four months (December 2023-March 2024) of the last financial year (2024-25) are added to the net borrowings of Rs 29,499.94 crore in the first five months of the current financial year 2024-25, the public debt of Telangana would rise by Rs 40,887.98 crore in the first months of the Congress government which assumed office in December 2023. It is doubtful whether the State will be able to meet the targets of receipts and expenditure in the remaining six months of the financial year (as the half-year will be over in the next few days with no significant change during September from the trends of the previous five months of the financial year). The Finance Minister's efforts to mobilise additional resources from the State's own tax and non-tax revenue sources are unlikely to yield any results since the VAT on petroleum products and liquor, Motor Vehicle Tax, Stamps Duty and Registration Fees and State Excise Duties cannot be raised any further since they have already reached peak levels.

Adding to the State's financial woes, HYDRAA's adverse impact is likely to cause a huge shortfall in tax revenues from Stamps and Registration on the one hand and non-tax revenues from the auctions and sales of Government lands and plots on the other.

There are, thus, bound to be huge shortfalls in achieving the targets of non-tax revenues and grants-in-aid and other contributions, which will bring down the State's expenditure correspondingly. The government, which is struggling to implement the six guarantees as well as scores of other promises of the Congress manifesto so far, is staring at a serious situation as it has far less resources on hand to spend on the ongoing schemes as well as the guarantees and the various promises.

The State cannot go for the higher quantum of borrowings than what has been budgeted as per the FRBM Act, as the pleas of the State government to the Central government to relax the norms and facilitate higher borrowings are unlikely to be heeded.

Just a few days ago, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy boasted that the government would make efforts to increase State's budget from Rs 3 lakh crore currently to Rs 7 lakh crore in the next four years with the ambition of making Telangana a $1-trillion dollar.

Gurukul teachers seek better work timings, infra

TS UTF and Gurukula Sanghala JAC members staging Maha Dharna. — Photo: Surya Sridhar

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

Teachers of five welfare residential educational institution societies, who are generally seen wielding chalk in the classrooms, on Saturday staged a Maha Dharna at Dharna Chowk. Holding placards and raising slogans, the teachers demanded change in their work timings besides enhancing mess charges for students among other unresolved issues.

The protest was organised by teachers under the auspices of TS UTF and Gurukula Sanghala Joint Action Committee (JAC) after the Congress government failed to address their pending 25 pleas including better work timings and enhancement of the mess charges. According to teachers, over 700 welfare residential educational institutions do not have permanent buildings, causing a lot of inconvenience to students and teachers. Participating as the chief guest, MLC Alugubelli Narsireddy said the recent common time-table issued by the government for all welfare schools was against the Right to Education Act.

The timetable was unscientific, causing severe psychological stress among students, he said and demanded the government to come up with a new timetable, considering students' mental abilities as well. Apart from enhancement of mess charges of students in line with the increased prices, the MLC demanded the government to pay welfare residential educational institutions teachers via the 010 account on the first day of the month.

Stating the teaching staff were in a lot of stress with the burden of non-teaching work, Prof. K Nageshwar said even though there was no residential accommodation in the school premises, the teachers including women were performing night duties. TS UTF president K Jangaiah, general secretary Chava Ravi, Gurukula Sanghala JAC chairman Mamidi Narayana, secretary general Dr. Madhusudan and teachers from 33 districts participated in the protest.

KCR condoles death of Dr Vijaya

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

BRS president and former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao expressed his deep condolences on the demise of renowned poet, writer and Ambedkarite Dr Vijaya Bharti.

Recalling her significant contributions as a literary and social scholar, he said Dr Vijaya Bharti had served as the director of Telugu Academy. She was the editor of Dr BR Ambedkar's writings and speeches. She also authored the biography of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, presenting it to the Telugu community for the first time. Her efforts in these areas were immense and highly valued. He extended condolences to the bereaved family. Dr. Vijaya Bharti was the daughter of the eminent poet and writer, Padma Bhushan Late Boyi Bhimanna. She was the wife of human rights activist Bojja Tarakam, and the mother of State Irrigation Department Principal Secretary Rahul Bojja.

In Brief

HYDERABAD
Intensify drive: Nadda

Union Minister and BJP national president JP Nadda asked party State unit to enrol over 50 lakh members during the membership drive in Telangana. Nadda reviewed the ongoing membership drive in the district and directed leaders to intensify the membership drive. The BJP got 77 lakh votes during the last Lok Sabha polls, hence it should not be difficult for the party to enrol 50 lakh, he said, adding that the party leaders should try to enrol maximum number of people at the booth level. "I want you to complete the target in the next 15 days,"he said.

HYDERABAD
3 arrested for robbery

The Hyderabad Commissioner's Task Force (West) team caught three persons, who were allegedly involved in a case of robbery reported at Madhuranagar two days ago. The police recovered a mobile phone and seized a motorcycle from them. The arrested were identified as Parsa Rahul (23), Dondu Rakesh (24) and M Ajay Reddy (26). According to the police, the trio snatched a mobile phone from a student at SR Nagar Metro Station road and fled the spot. The victim approached the police and lodged a complaint.

HYDERABAD
Woman murdered

An unidentified woman was murdered, and the body was dumped near a secluded place at Shadnagar, Ranga Reddy district, in the early hours of Saturday. The body of the woman, aged around 30, was found lying at a secluded place at Srinivas colony of Shadnagar. The body was packed in a black bag and shrouded with a blanket. According to the police, the woman was killed after stabbing her repeatedly. Police shifted the body to Osmania General Hospital mortuary.

Sand worth Rs 150 cr diverted, says KTR

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Saturday said there was a massive Rs 150 crore sand scam in the Mining Department under Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. He said fake documents and receipts were created leading to the diversion of 1,50,000 tonnes of sand valued at Rs 150 crore.

The perpetrators reportedly diverted the sand by creating false papers, claiming it was meant for the needs of Hyderabad Metro Water Works. This scandal, which took place within Revanth Reddy's department, raised serious questions about the involvement or knowledge of government officials, he said.

He demanded an immediate investigation into these sand thefts and called for strict action against those responsible. The BRS leader emphasised that such a large-scale scam could not have occurred without the knowledge of higher officials and urged for transparency in handling the matter.

Prez calls for network of women advocates

Says it will help deal with cases of atrocities against women

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday urged the NALSAR University of Law, including its alumni, to enlist the support of all stakeholders and help in setting up a nationwide network of women advocates and law students. The President expressed confidence that this network will work with the mandate to make concerted efforts to prevent atrocities against women and deal with cases of such atrocities.

Delivering the convocation address at NALSAR University of Law here on Saturday, the President appreciated the efforts of the university in taking care of issues concerning disability, access to justice, prison and juvenile justice, and legal aid. She was also happy to note that NALSAR has set up an Animal Law Centre. She said the younger generations expected to protect animals and birds, trees and waterbodies as necessities for the well-being of humanity and NALSAR's Animal Law Centre was a good step in that direction.

The President told graduating students that as advocates, they would have a duty to assist the court in dispensing justice, apart from taking care of the interests of clients. She said whatever role they choose as a legal professional, they should always stick to the values of integrity and courage. Speaking truth to power makes them more powerful, she added.

President Droupadi Murmu during the inauguration of Bharatiya Kala Mahotsav at Rashtrapati Nilayam in Secunderabad. — Photo: PTI

She handed over gold medals to the winning students. Bhavya Johari topped the tally with ten gold medals followed by Amishi with seven, both from BA LLB honours stream. NALSAR University Vice Chancellor Prof Srikrishna Deva Rao gave a glimpse of the university's achievements.

University Chancellor Justice Alok Aradhe and Supreme Court Judge PS Narasimha presented degrees to the graduating students.

A total of 582 degrees were awarded.

Digital cards: Pilot project from Oct 3

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy instructed officials to identify two areas (two rural areas and two wards or divisions in urban segments) in all the 119 Assembly constituencies for issue of family digital cards on a pilot basis from October 3.

Based on the available data regarding identification of families and details of family digital cards, officials have been asked to conduct door-to-door study in the selected areas. RDO-rank officers were to be in every rural Assembly segment and Municipal Zonal Commissioner-rank officer in the urban segment to monitor the survey. The Chief Secretary was asked to appoint senior officials, who have been appointed to monitor the floods in the recent heavy rains as Monitoring Officials (Supervisors). The CM suggested that families should be identified on the basis of data in existing ration cards, Rajiv Arogyasri, IT, agriculture and other schemes. Officials should stop collecting unnecessary data like bank accounts and PAN cards, he said.

> Based on available data, officials have been asked to conduct door-to-door study in the selected areas

Sufi institutions oppose Wakf Bill

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

The 'Kulhind Anjuman e Sufi Sajjagan', a committee comprising the heads of different Sufi institutions in the country, opposed the Wakf Amendment Bill (2024). "We studied the Bill and have several reservations over its implementation. Our apprehensions will be conveyed to the Joint Parliamentary Committee," said Syed Gulaam Afzal Biyabani alias Khusro Pasha, chairman of Telangana State Haj Committee and the Sajjada Nasheen (custodian) of Dargah Kazipet. The committee was formed to protect the interest of the Sufi institutions, particularly the shrines and properties attached to them.

Inaugurates Bharatiya Kala Mahotsav

HYDERABAD: President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday inaugurated the Bharatiya Kala Mahotsav 2024 at the Rashtrapati Nilayam here. The eight-day-long Kala Mahotsav showcases the art, culture, crafts, and culinary diversity of the northeastern States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura.

Speaking on the occasion, she said the cultural diversity, music, art and traditional attire of the northeastern States are the country's heritage. The 'Mahotsav' is an effort to make the countrymen familiar with the traditions and the communities of the region, she said. Murmu expressed confidence that the cultural event would act as a bridge between the northeast and the south of the country. She hoped that many people would visit the 'Mahotsav' in the next eight days and connect with the culture of northeast. The event is also an opportunity to promote cultural exchanges. The people of northeast are known for their hospitality, hard work and enthusiasm and she got people's love whenever she visited there, she said. It is our collective responsibility to preserve and promote the country's rich cultural heritage. She appreciated the artistes who participated in the event. PTI

Fighting to hold Ground

AS JAINOOR, THE TRIBAL HEARTLAND OF NORTH TELANGANA, BURNS, A DEEP DIVE INTO THE HISTORY OF ETHNIC TRIBES REVEALS A TRAIL OF UNHINDERED EXPLOITATION

S HARPAL SINGH

— PHOTO: S HARPAL SINGH

By evening on that unusual but quite eventful day in Jainoor, the firefighters were silently praying for the weakened monsoon to resume its activity vigorously. The locals and the fire brigade were finding it difficult to douse the scorching fires that came as a result of vandalism and arson all through the day.

The undesirable, a deep divide in the local communities coexisting in the tribal heartland of North Telangana had happened. The centre of the violence was the commercially bustling mandal headquarters in Kumram Bheem Asifabad district but the anger had also spread among aboriginal people living in Adilabad and Mancherial districts, all three a part of erstwhile Adilabad district (the fourth one being Nirmal).

THE FIRST TIME ADILABAD TRIBALS WERE NOTICED BY THE OUTSIDE WORLD WAS IN 1940 DURING THE RULE OF THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD

An incident of attempted rape as well as savage physical assault of a tribal woman was the cause of their rage towards one of the local non-tribal communities to which the accused belonged. In the larger context, however, the tribals were agitated over the manner in which the laws that constitutionally are meant to protect them from vulnerabilities are perpetually being flouted to their detriment.

The tribals, predominantly an agrarian community, have demanded an audience with Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy to air their grievances. They have demanded strict implementation of laws that govern the Scheduled Areas, alternately known as Agency areas, thereby insulating them from malafide intentions and actions against their culture, traditions and well-being.

Aboriginal Communities

A deep dive into the history of the ethnic tribes in North Telangana will only reveal a trail of unhindered exploitation and bullying over the last century and a half, and perhaps more importantly the abject failure of rulers in protecting them against economic and cultural assaults. No doubt, Jainoor was waiting to happen.

RAJ GOND LEADER KUMRAM BHEEM AND 14 OF HIS BAND OF REBELS WERE KILLED BY NIZAM'S POLICE FORCE ON SEPTEMBER 1, 1940, IN JODEGHAT

Adilabad has six aboriginal communities that are part of the Raj Gond ecosystem because of their cultural association, the Raj Gonds being the flagship tribe. Besides, there is the Lambada plains tribe. Of the total tribal population of 4.95 lakh (2011 census), about 3.7 lakh are Indigenous tribes scattered roughly between the Penganga riverine border on the north and Godavari River on the south. The Pranahita River makes up the eastern border while Adilabad's border with Maharashtra's Kinwat taluk in Nanded district forms the western border.

The tribes, Raj Gond, Pardhan, Kolam, Thotti, Naikpod and Andh, had lived in peaceful isolation in the hills and forests for centuries with much of their population concentrated in the Agency mandals of Utnoor, Indervelli, Sirikonda, Narnoor and Gadiguda in Adilabad district, and Jainoor, Sirpur (U) and Lingapur in Kumram Bheem Asifabad district, all falling under Fifth Schedule of the Constitution. Utnoor is the nerve centre of all tribal activity in the north of Telangana and the headquarters of the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), Utnoor.

As the North Telangana tribes are among the few pockets in the country which have retained their pristineness, it is all the more important to shield them from any outside attack. But, the threat of the ethnic tribes being overwhelmed in all aspects is real.

The process of outside influence on the culture and customs of the Adivasis has speeded up in the last three decades going by the influx of outsiders in the Agency villages, especially in mandal headquarters where there is even now some tribal presence. The influx is 'illegal' as per special protection laws of tribals and has gone unchecked due to the utter disregard towards the rule of law shown by authorities.

Mandal headquarters like Jainoor, Utnoor, Narnoor, Indervelli and Ichoda have become bustling business centres. It is quite evident that there is a change in demography and this change has adversely influenced the prospects of the local Adivasis.

Jodeghat Incident

The first time the Adilabad tribals were noticed by the outside world was in 1940 during the rule of the Nizam of Hyderabad. The legendary Kumram Bheem, a Raj Gond leader, and 14 of his band of rebels were killed by the Nizam's police force on September 1 that year in Jodeghat.

The issue involved was a grant of tilling rights on forest lands which were denied to the forest-dwelling Adivasis following the implementation of new forest conservation laws in the early last century. The Jodeghat incident brought Austrian-born anthropologist Christoph von Furer-Haimendorf to Adilabad district, mandated as he was by the Nizam's government to conduct a thorough study of the situation of the aboriginal people.

Having taken cognizance of the irritant, Prof Haimendorf influenced the Nizam to distribute pattas on 1.6 lakh acres of land to 30,000 aboriginal families in the area. In his 1943 'Note on Position of Aboriginals in Asifabad, Rajura and Utnoor taluqs of Adilabad district', Prof Haimendorf discussed the conditions prevailing in Hyderabad and how the ethnic Raj Gonds and other tribes were being dispossessed of their lands.

Unwelcome Intruders

The anthropologist's study in these parts also for the first time revealed the quantum of the influx of outsiders and its impact on the lives of the local tribal people. On page 67 of the Note he said, "The policy of opening up the district and raising revenue had the government encouraging influx of new settlers by granting them pattas free of charge so that they can make lands arable."

"With the gradual improvement of communication and influx of cultivators... the country became valuable and attractive to non-cultivators and Muslims, Brahmans and Komatis of Rajura, Adilabad, Asifabad and Nirmal began acquiring villages to be managed on a commercial basis," the researcher noted. He provided examples of habitations and villages from where the settler communities ousted the aboriginals.

Though the latest demographic statistics are not available due to the delay in conducting the 2021 Census, a fair idea of the changes in that aspect can be had from available statistics. As per the 2001 Census, the population of tribals in the Agency mandals was 1,10,181 and that of non-tribals at 68,095. In 2011, the population of tribals was pegged at 1,34,235 and that of non-tribals at 83,325. These statistics, however, do not portray the reality on the ground level as most of the non-tribal population is concentrated in respective mandal headquarters. According to independent estimates, for example, Jainoor mandal headquarters has a population of about 8,000. The tribal population here is a dismal 600.

OUTSIDE INFLUENCE ON THE CULTURE AND CUSTOMS OF ADIVASIS HAS SPEEDED UP IN THE LAST THREE DECADES GOING BY THE INFLUX OF OUTSIDERS IN THE AGENCY VILLAGES, THREATENING THEIR VERY SURVIVAL

The shift in population size in the tribal areas is also having an impact on the elections in the three Assembly seats — Asifabad, Khanapur and Boath that are reserved for Scheduled Tribes. For instance, the numerical strength of the non-tribal voters negates all the advantages that tribal voters can enjoy in electing a candidate of their own choice.

Observers have identified this lopsided population composition to be the root cause of ill will between the component communities. "The non-tribals tend to dominate us despite leeching on our resources," was how an Adivasi leader terms the situation.

Prof Haimendorf's detailed research on land and non-tribal migration in the Agency tracts in the 1940s remains a seminal work though other studies were also done simultaneously by Moazam Hussain and P Setumadhava Rao in his association. In later years, especially the 1980s, Urmila Pingle collaborated for carrying out more studies on tribals.

The surge in the influx of non-tribals continued as successive governments turned a blind eye towards the problem. More and more gullible Adivasis were cheated as non-tribals grabbed their lands by fraudulent means. The land issue even provided a foothold for naxalites in the Agency tracts. The infamous Indervelli police firing of April 20, 1981, came as a culmination of the frustration of the ethnic people as a result of being dispossessed of their lands.

Embers of Conflict

Then came the Adivasi movement against the Lambada tribe in 2017-18. The latter has been accused of getting included in the list of Scheduled Tribes in 1976 through fraudulent means and by virtue of that grabbing all the benefits of the ST category. And before the embers of the Adivasi-Lambada conflict died down completely, the Jainoor incident happened. This incident has united the aboriginal people across the erstwhile united Adilabad who now want the influx of non-tribals to be stopped completely and expulsion of Muslims from the mandal headquarters.

They demand that the special laws governing the tribal belt be implemented in letter and spirit. "This is the only way of stemming the rot," says Kumra Vittal Rao, a Raj Gond elder who works among Adivasis at the grassroots level.

Ineffective Laws

In independent India, governments did realise the gravity and complications arising out of gullible tribals being made to part with their lands by deceitful means and made some special laws to control the phenomenon. On the ground, nonetheless, these laws were observed more in the breach.

Among the laws included the AP Scheduled Areas Land Transfer (APSALT) Regulations, 1959, (with effect from Dec 1, 1963) on the transfer of immovable property from an ST person to a non-tribal. It also talks of the restoration of the land to the original tribal owner. The APSALT Rules 1969 made some fine-tuning in the existing regulations.

The APSALT Amendment Regulation 1/1970 (with effect from Feb 3, 1970) barred the transfer of any immovable property between tribals and non-tribals and non-tribals and non-tribals. It is these regulations whose potential was watered down by way of non-implementation.

The land issues will also be under check if the government follows the recommendation No. 9.41 of the Koneru Ranga Rao Committee. It says the ITDAs have to control the influx or infiltration of the non-tribal population by taking steps in light of land transfer regulation provisions inco-ordination with licensing departments to check the establishment of shops/enterprises, construction of houses or for any other commercial purpose.

In the absence of such protection, the tribals are a disadvantaged entity so far as entering any commercial activity is concerned. The more resourceful outsiders have already captured all the businesses in the mandal headquarters.

The other potent law that has been ignored is the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act, 1996, which gave way to formulate relevant rules under the AP PESA Rules, 2011, notified through GO Ms 66 on March 24, 2011. There are nine rules which concern the socio-economic and cultural aspects of Adivasis.

ADILABAD HAS SIX ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES THAT ARE PART OF THE RAJ GOND ECOSYSTEM, THE RAJ GONDS BEING THE FLAGSHIP TRIBE. BESIDES, THERE IS THE LAMBADA PLAINS TRIBE

"The tribals will benefit greatly if the PESA rules, more so those related to marketing, are implemented in letter and spirit," says Kova Daulath Rao Mokashi, Telangana State president of the Adivasi Sena, who works among the tribals creating awareness on PESA. He cited the example of the tribal women's self-help groups of Venkatapur in Dandepalli mandal of Mancherial district where the grant of purchase licence resulted in improving their incomes.

Of more relevance is the PESA rule associated with empowering the gram sabha concerned to verify whether some lands are purchased in the name of tribal women and being enjoyed by non-tribals. In the aftermath of the Jainoor incident, allegations are being made that Muslims are marrying tribal women to protect illegally gained immovable property. According to the allegations made during various peace restoration meetings, the Aboriginal people have alleged that Muslims have married over 50 tribal women. The government is believed to have promised to look into this allegation.

UTNOOR IS THE NERVE CENTRE OF ALL TRIBAL ACTIVITY IN NORTH OF TELANGANA AND THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE INTEGRATED TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, UTNOOR

The government seems to have initiated efforts for the restoration of order by way of the implementation of the PESA rules. Collectors of Adilabad and Kumram Bheem Asifabad have already appointed special officers in panchayats and created awareness about the rules among the officials.

(The author is an independent journalist)

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In Brief

JAMMU

2 dead as car falls into river

Two persons, including a girl, were killed and another injured when their car skidded off the road and plunged into Chenab river in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district on Saturday, police said. The accident took place near Garsoo village around 1.45 pm when the trio were travelling to their Drabshala village in Kishtwar district, they said. A rescue operation was launched immediately after the car rolled down over 200 feet before hitting the riverbed, police officials said. PTI

BIJNOR (UP)

Villagers kill leapord

A leopard was beaten to death by people in a village in this Uttar Pradesh district after the animal attacked a Homeguard Jawan, a forest department officer said on Saturday. The incident occurred on Friday evening in Amannagar village, he said. Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Gyan Singh said Homeguard Jawan Surendra had gone to a tubewell behind his house with his children — Disha (20), Reshu (14) and Deepanshu (18) — where the leopard was sitting on a mango tree. PTI

BALASORE

Bus turns turtle, 4 dead

At least four persons were killed and 30 others injured when a tourist bus from Uttar Pradesh fell on its side in Odisha's Balasore district. The accident took place when the bus on its way to Puri skidded off the road and fell on its side in paddy field near Mahamadnagar Patna on NH-60 on Friday midnight. The injured were admitted to G K Bhattar hospital at Jaleswar and 17 seriously injured were shifted to Balasore district headquarters hospital. PTI

Shed apathy, CEC to urban voters

Efforts on to ensure maximum polling in ensuing Maha polls

PTI
MUMBAI

Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar on Saturday expressed concern over the urban voter apathy and said efforts are being made to ensure maximum polling in the ensuing Maharashtra Assembly elections.

Addressing a press conference in Mumbai after reviewing poll preparedness for the Maharashtra Assembly elections, Kumar singled out areas like Colaba and Kalyan in and around Mumbai which recorded "among the lowest" voter turnout in the Lok Sabha polls held this year.

Daily wage earners and others in the unorganised sector should be informed by the administration that voting day will be a paid holiday for them, he said. "Our effort will be to ensure that there is maximum enrolment and voting in Maharashtra Assembly elections," he said. "We have asked the Maharashtra Government to shift officials who have served in their home district or current posting for over three years," Kumar said, adding he has asked for a compliance report for the same in the next couple of days.

> "It is the right of voters to know if any candidate has criminal background. Parties should also inform people reasons for fielding such candidates
>
> — RAJIV KUMAR
> Chief Election Commissioner

The CEC said it is the right of voters to know if any candidate has a criminal background. The political parties should also inform people the reasons for fielding such candidates, he added. He said all helicopters (during electioneering) will be checked to ensure inducement-free Assembly elections in Maharashtra.

Wrapping up his two-day visit to the State, Kumar said those spreading fake news and using deep fake tech on social media ahead of Maharashtra polls will be dealt with sternly. Kumar also said it is the right of voters to know if any candidate has a criminal background. In such cases, political parties should also inform the voters about their inability to field anyone else, he added.

"I am confident Maharashtra will contribute to the ensuing festival of democracy (assembly elections)," Kumar said. "We met all the stakeholders, including political parties and officials during our stay in Mumbai," he said. "Political parties told us to keep in mind festivals like Diwali, Dev Diwali and Chhath Puja before announcing the dates of the elections," Kumar said.

To a query on whether the Maharashtra elections will be in a single phase or multiple phases, he said, "You will come to know that later." There will be 1,00,186 polling booths in the Maharashtra assembly elections, the CEC said. "We met the leaders of 11 parties including BSP, AAP, CPI(M), INC, MNS, SP, Shiv Sena (UBT), Shiv Sena," he said.

Election Commissioners Gyanesh Kumar and Dr Sukhbir Singh Sandhu were also present at the press conference. Maharashtra assembly elections have to be held before November 26 as the term of the 288-member House ends on that date.

Sitharaman booked over electoral bonds scheme

Complainant accuses FM of 'extortion'

BENGALURU

A case was registered on Saturday against union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and others on the directions of a court here, following a complaint relating to the now-scrapped electoral bonds scheme.

According to police, an FIR was registered under sections 384 (punishment for extortion) and 120B (criminal conspiracy) read with 34 (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) against union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, ED officials, office-bearers of the BJP at state and national level, based on the order of a special court.

The complaint was lodged by Adarsh R Iyer, co-president of 'Janaadhikaara Sangharsha Parishath' (JSP) alleging that the accused "committed extortion under the guise and garb of electoral bonds and benefitted to the tune of 8,000 and more crore of rupees." The complainant further alleged that Sitharaman through the clandestine aid and support of ED officials facilitated extortion of thousands of crores of rupees for the benefit of others both at the State and national levels.

> Alleges that the Minister facilitated extortion of thousands of crores of rupees for the benefit of others

"The entire extortion racket under the garb of electoral bonds has been orchestrated hand in glove with officials of BJP at various levels." The Supreme Court in February had struck down the electoral bond scheme, saying it violates the right to information and the freedom of speech and expression under the Constitution.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramiah, whose resignation is sought by the opposition BJP as an FIR was registered against him over the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment case, said: "According to BJP leaders' argument, Nirmala Sitharaman should resign now, right?" Responding to this, Union Minister Kumaraswamy, said: "Why should Nirmala Sitharaman resign? Has electoral bond funds gone to Nirmala Sitharaman's personal account to resign? Has she misused power and benefited herself like you (Siddaramaiah)?".

Leader of Opposition in Legislative Assembly R Ashoka said the Congress doesn't have the moral right to comment on the Union Finance Minister, and there can be no comparison between the electoral bond issue against her and MUDA case against Siddaramaiah. "....(electoral bond) issue is over, it has been decided by the Supreme Court, and our leader will take necessary action in accordance with law (in connection with FIR). Where is the comparison to a case where you (Siddaramaiah) used the government (land) for personal benefit, to this (electoral bonds case)..." he said. PTI

Fresh violence erupts in Manipur

IMPHAL

The shutdown called by Kuki-Zo groups affected normal life in Manipur's Churachandpur and Kangpokpi districts on Saturday, while fresh violence was reported from a village in Jiribam, officials said.

The shutdown was called by Kuki-Zo groups, including the Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum (ITLF) and Kuki Students Organisation (KSO), in protest against Security Advisor Kuldiep Singh's statement about militants entering the State from outside.

Markets and other commercial establishments remained shut in the two districts, while vehicles stayed off the roads, officials said. No untoward incidents have so far been reported, they said. The shutdown began in the two districts on Friday and would continue till Sunday. Singh had on September 20 claimed that security forces have taken a number of steps in the wake of reports that "900 militants" who have entered the State might carry out violence in peripheral villages of Imphal valley districts.

The State government on Wednesday, however, retracted the statement, asserting that the likelihood of "any such misadventures by armed groups is minimal and unsubstantiated". Meanwhile, fresh violence was reported from a village in Jiribam district, police said. Armed men fired indiscriminately at Mongbung village from nearby hilltops and surrounding dense forests, prompting retaliation from 'village volunteers', they said.

> Armed men fire indiscriminately at Mongbung village from nearby hilltops and surrounding dense forests

Women, children and elderly people were moved to safer places following the violence, police said. Security forces were deployed to control the situation, they said, adding that no casualties were reported. The combined forces of state police, BSF and CRPF seized two improvised mortars, locally known as 'pumpi', during another search operation in Gothol village in Churachandpur district. PTI

Communal tension over interfaith relationship

DEHRADUN

Members of two communities hurled stones at each other and damaged two-wheelers as communal tension flared up after a 16-year-old Muslim girl was found with a Hindu man at the railway station here, an official said. More than 100 people were booked on charges of stone-pelting and rioting on Thursday night while a man belonging to a right-wing outfit was detained for questioning in connection with the vandalism outside the station.

According to the police, the 21-year-old man and the girl hail from Badaun in Uttar Pradesh and were in a relationship. The girl allegedly fled home to meet the man who works in the Selaqui area near here, a police official said. Upon reaching Dehradun, she called up the man who met her at the railway station in the night. Seen walking around at an odd hour, railway police staff quizzed them, the official said.

The police contacted the girl's parents and learnt that a missing complaint had been lodged by them at a police station in Badaun, he said. However, as soon as the news of the duo roaming in the railway station spread in the area, members of the two communities gathered outside the station and a heated exchange of words ensued, Dehradun Senior Superintendent of Police Ajai Singh said. PTI

Suggestions sought for 'Swarna Andhra'

AMARAVATI

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Saturday called for suggestions from the people of the State for 'Swarna Andhra Pradesh' (golden state) with a GSDP of USD 2.4 trillion by 2047. The Chief Minister also invited ideas for the future vision of the southern State for achieving a per capita income of over $43,000 by 2047.

"Our target is to lead India with a GSDP of $2.4 trillion and a per capita income of over $43,000 by 2047. As we embark on this journey towards SwarnaAndhrapradesh @ 2047, we're inviting suggestions from our fellow citizens on shaping a brighter AP," said Naidu on X. PTI

Dasara Festivities

Devotees carry an idol of Goddess Durga ahead of Navratri festival, at Dharavi in Mumbai on Saturday. — Photo: PTI

Loyola organises 'Lenzcape'

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

A two-day photography festival Lenzcape 2024, organised by the Department of Mass Communication, Loyola Academy, which provided students a platform to showcase their skills, learn from industry experts, and engage in creative discussions, concluded on Saturday.

This year's theme, 'Reminiscence: A Sense of Nostalgia', with a sub-theme on fashion photography, encouraged participants to explore creativity while fostering hands-on learning and networking opportunities, a press release said.

The festival was inaugurated by Principal Fr Dr NB Babu SJ, alongside vice-principal of Arts and Science Fr. Prabhu SJ and Dean of Arts Dr Swaralipi, who delivered inspiring speeches that set a motivational tone for the festival.

The festival featured guest sessions from renowned photographers including Michael Monteiro, Krishna Chaitanya, Satya Narayana Gola and Dr Namrata followed by question and answer sessions.

The festival also featured on-the-spot competition themed 'Campus Life', where students creatively captured visuals reflecting their campus experiences and a lively student debate on 'Photo Manipulation through AI Tools'. Students participated in various competitions, including Main Theme, Fashion Photography, On-Spot Photography, and Debate, with cash prizes awarded to the top performers.

Honour for retired Andhra varsity prof

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

The former Head of Geology Department, Andhra University, Prof (retd) Nandipati Subba Rao has figured in the world's top 2 per cent scientists' 2024 list compiled by Stanford University, US.

The university released the rankings on September 17, covering 22 scientific fields and 174 sub-fields. These rankings evaluate scientists based on standardised citation metrics (h-index), highlighting the most influential researchers worldwide.

Prof Rao, now settled in Hyderabad was ranked at 3,766 of the 2,23,152 scientists around the world. There were 5,352 scientists from India on the list, in which Prof Rao stood at the 31st position. This was for the fifth time since 2020 that he made it to the top 2 per cent scientists' list.

Prof Rao's research focuses primarily on Hydrogeology, emphasising quality, chemistry, contamination of groundwater, and health risk assessment. So far, he published 130 research papers in reputed national and international journals.

Nandipati Subba Rao

He received several awards, including the National Mineral Award, State Scientist Award, State Best Teacher Award from the Andhra Pradesh government. He got a place in the Limca Book of Records (2013).

Modi calls Congress, NC and PDP 'enemies of Constitution'

JAMMU

Jammu and Kashmir people are looking forward to a government free of "corruption, terrorism and separatism" for peace and a better future for their children, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday and described the Congress, NC and PDP as the "biggest enemies" of the Constitution.

At a poll rally at M A M Stadium here ahead of the last phase of the Assembly elections, he referred to the 2016 surgical strikes across the border and said, "the terror mentors know that if they do anything wrong, Modi will find them even in 'Pataal' (netherworld)."

The third and final phase of the Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir will be held on October 1. As many as 40 seats — 24 in the Jammu region and 16 in Kashmir — will go to polls in this phase. Modi claimed at the rally that there was a massive enthusiasm among people for the BJP. "The people of Jammu and Kashmir, who have been at the receiving end of the rule of three families — Congress, NC and PDP — do not want them back." "They do not want corruption, discrimination in jobs, terrorism, separatism and bloodshed. Instead, they want peace and a better future for their children," the Prime Minister said in his nearly 45-minute speech.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Modi said the people in Jammu and Kashmir want the BJP to form a government and the heavy polling in the first two phases reflects the mood of the people. Alleging that previous governments discriminated against the Jammu region, the Prime Minister told the rally, "This is the city of temples. Do not waste this opportunity, a BJP government will be formed and it will address all your issues." "This election is going to write a new chapter. Previously Congress, NC, PDP leaders and their families benefited from their governments while you faced destruction," Modi said at the rally. "The Congress is the biggest party responsible for the loss of generations (to terrorism). From the time of Independence, the party's wrong policies encouraged inimical forces," he alleged.

Modi said ceasefire violations used to be a routine along the borders in Jammu because "they (Congress) used to show them white flags". PTI

YSRCP performs 'forgiveness' rituals

AMARAVATI

YSRCP leaders and cadres across Andhra Pradesh conducted 'forgiveness' rituals on Saturday to 'atone' for the alleged 'sin' committed by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu by casting alleged aspersions on the sanctity of Tirupati laddus (consecrated sweet).

Chandrababu Naidu alleged during a recent NDA legislative party meeting that the erstwhile YSRCP government did not even spare Sri Venkateswara temple and used substandard ingredients and animal fats for making laddus.

The allegations sparked a massive controversy across the country, hurting the sentiments of crores of Hindus. Following the nationwide uproar, former AP Chief Minister and YSRCP chief Y S Jaganmohan Reddy alleged that Naidu was blatantly lying about laddus and said that the alleged sacrilege did not occur at all while the ghee samples sent for testing were drawn under the NDA regime. PTI

India blasts Pak for raising Article 370

Says cross-border terrorism will inevitably invite consequences

PTI
UNITED NATIONS

In a strong retort, India has slammed Pakistan in the UN General Assembly, saying its "fingerprints" are on terrorist incidents across the world and the country should realise that cross-border terrorism against India will "inevitably invite consequences".

India exercised its Right of Reply in the UN General Assembly on Friday in response to Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif raising the issue of Jammu and Kashmir in his address at the General Debate of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly.

"This Assembly regrettably witnessed a travesty this morning. A country run by the military, with a global reputation for terrorism, narcotics trade and transnational crime has had the audacity to attack the world's largest democracy," First Secretary in India's Permanent Mission to the UN Bhavika Mangalanandan said, delivering India's Right of Reply.

She asserted that as the world knows, Pakistan has long employed cross-border terrorism as a weapon against its neighbours. "It has attacked our Parliament, our financial capital Mumbai, marketplaces and pilgrimage routes," she said, referring to the 2001 Indian Parliament attack and the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks carried out by Pakistan-based terror groups. "The list is long. For such a country to speak about violence anywhere is hypocrisy at its worst," Mangalanandan said. In his address, Sharif raised the Kashmir issue, as expected, and said that to "secure durable peace", India should reverse the Abrogation of Article 370 and enter into a dialogue for a "peaceful" resolution of the issue. He said India has spurned Pakistan's proposals for a mutual "Strategic Restraint Regime". Responding to this reference "to some proposal of strategic restraint", India asserted that there "can be no compact with terrorism. In fact, Pakistan should realise that cross-border terrorism against India will inevitably invite consequences."

Reminding that this was a nation that hosted Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, she said Pakistan's "fingerprints are on so many terrorist incidents across the world, whose policies attract the dreads of many societies to make it their home. "Perhaps it should come as no surprise that its Prime Minister would so speak in this hallowed hall. Yet we must make clear how unacceptable his words are to all of us. We know that Pakistan will seek to counter the truth with more lies. Repetition will change nothing. Our stand is clear and needs no reiteration," she said.

India stressed that it is even more extraordinary for a country with a history of rigged elections to talk about political choices, that too in a democracy. "The real truth is that Pakistan covets our territory, and in fact, has continuously used terrorism to disrupt elections in Jammu and Kashmir, an inalienable and integral part of India," the young Indian diplomat said. She said it is ridiculous that a nation that committed genocide in 1971 and which persecutes its minorities relentlessly even now, "dare speak about intolerances and phobias.

The world can see for itself what Pakistan really is." A Pakistani diplomat went on to respond to Mangalanandan with a Right of Reply. Describing India's assertions as "baseless and misleading", the Pakistani diplomat said the UNSC has unequivocally called for a free plebiscite to enable the people of J&K to exercise their inalienable right to self- determination.

First Secretary in India's Permanent Mission to the UN Bhavika Mangalanandan at the 79th session of UNGA. — Photo: PTI

UN must evolve: Bhutan backs India's bid for permanent seat

UNITED NATIONS: India with its significant economic growth and leadership of the Global South deserves a permanent seat at the UN Security Council, Bhutan's Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay has said. He also expressed "deepest" gratitude to India for its "support and friendship" for his country's journey of graduating from the Least Developed Countries (LDC) category.

"The UN must evolve to meet realities of today's world. The UNSC is a relic of the past. We need a Council that reflects current geopolitical, economic landscape and social realities," Tobgay said in his address to the General Debate of the 79th session of UNGA. PTI

Floods wreak havoc in 12 districts of Bihar

Over 13.5 lakh people affected; IMD forecasts heavy rains, flash floods

Commuters wade through a flooded area after an increase in the water level of Gandak river due to heavy rainfall, in Bagaha, Bihar on Saturday. — Photo: PTI

PATNA

The Bihar government has sounded an alert for floods along swollen rivers such as Kosi, Gandak and Ganga in northern and central parts of the State following the release of water from Valmikinagar and Birpur barrages on Saturday, a senior official said.

The development may aggravate the condition of over 13.5 lakh people in 12 districts, who were already affected by inundation following heavy rains. A total of 5.31 lakh cusecs of water was released from Birpur Barrage on Kosi river till 2 pm, the highest in 56 years, said Santosh Kumar Mall, Principal Secretary of the State Water Resources Department. He said that all safety measures were being ensured for securing the embankments.

The last time the maximum water which was discharged from this barrage was 7.88 lakh cusecs of water in 1968. Similarly, 4.49 lakh cusecs of water was released from Valmikinagar Barrage till 2 pm. This is the highest water discharged from this barrage after 6.39 lakh cusecs released in 2003. "The water level of several rivers — Gandak, Kosi, Bagmati, Burhi Gandak, Kamla Balan and Mahananda and the Ganga— has been rising across the State, following continuous rainfall over the past two-three days.

"Incessant rainfall in the catchment areas of Nepal has also led to rivers touching or flowing above the danger level at several places in the bordering districts," the senior official said. Following the heavy discharge of water from these two barrages, the excess river water entered low-lying areas of West and East Champaran districts, officials said. An alert has already been sounded for several districts of Bihar as the IMD predicted heavy rain and warned of flash flood risk in parts of the State.

Districts such as West and East Champaran, Sitamarhi, Sheohar, Muzaffarpur, Gopalganj, Siwan, Saran, Vaishali, Patna, Jehanabad, Madhubani and Bhojpur districts are likely to experience heavy rain, an India Meteorological Department (IMD) bulletin issued on Friday said.

"These districts are at risk of low to moderate flash floods," it said. The state disaster management department asked the administration of the districts to remain on alert and take preventive measures in the wake of the forecast. Around 12 districts situated along the Ganga, including Buxar, Bhojpur, Saran, Patna, Samastipur, Bhagalpur, are experiencing a flood-like situation. PTI

In Brief

SRINAGAR
6 terrorist aides held

Six terrorist associates were arrested and a large quantity of arms was recovered in Pulwama. Police said improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and arms/ammunition with incriminating materials were recovered from their possession by police in Awantipora. "Awantipora police got specific input that a Pakistan-based Kashmiri militant of Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) outfit was into the process of identifying youths who could be motivated to join terror ranks," he added. IANS

NEW DELHI
5 of family found dead

The decomposed bodies of a 46-year-old man and his four daughters, two of them differently-abled, have been found from their rented accommodation in southwest Delhi's Vasant Kunj area, police said on Saturday. The bodies, found on Friday afternoon, did not have any injury mark. Police found three packets of celphos poison, five glasses and a spoon containing a suspicious liquid from the house. Police suspect it to be a case of suicide as no evidence of foul play has been found. PTI

NEW DELHI
Best Tourism Village

Sualkuchi village, which holds a unique place in Assam's socio-economic history for being the home to a thriving silk weaving industry, has been selected as one of the best tourism villages in the 'craft' category for this year.
The award was announced by the Ministry of Tourism on the occasion of the World Tourism Day on Friday, officials said. The village is renowned for preserving the legacy of silk fabrics such as Muga, Eri, Paat and Tasar. PTI

Cop killed, 2 injured in J&K encounter

JAMMU

A policeman was killed and two officers were injured Saturday in a fierce gunfight with terrorists in a remote village of Kathua district in poll-bound Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. The encounter at Kog-Mandli in Billawar tehsil occurred amid heightened security arrangements in the district which goes to poll in the third and final phase on October 1 along with Jammu, Udhampur, Samba, Baramulla, Bandipora and Kupwara. Jammu Zone Additional Director General of Police Anand Jain and senior officers rushed to the scene to supervise the operation, the officials said. "During the ongoing encounter in Kog (Mandli), one police personnel, Head Constable Bashir Ahmed, has sacrificed his life, and one ASI has sustained bullet injuries," a police spokesperson said. According to security officials, a deputy superintendent of police (operations) was also injured in the encounter.

The exchange of fire started around 5.30 pm when security forces launched a cordon and search in the forested village following information about the presence of a group of terrorists inside a house, the officials said. As the forces approached the target house, the hiding terrorists opened fire, prompting retaliation by the security forces, they said. PTI

On High Alert

Security personnel keep a vigil after a gunbattle broke out with terrorists at Adigam area, in Kulgam district on Saturday. At least two unidentified terrorists were killed and five security personnel, including an officer, sustained injuries. — Photo: PTI

Udhayanidhi named TN Deputy CM

CHENNAI

Amid a growing chorus in the party for his elevation, Tamil Nadu Sports Minister and son of Chief Minister MK Stalin, Udhayanidhi, was elevated as Deputy CM on Saturday with additional responsibility, in a Cabinet reshuffle that saw the return of V Senthil Balaji to the council of ministers two days after securing bail in a money laundering case.

The ruling DMK's rank and file had been seeking 46-year-old Udhayanidhi Stalin's promotion with an eye on the 2026 Assembly elections in the State, which the party is keen to win and retain power in the State. PTI

Delhi reports three firing incidents in 24 hours

New Delhi

Hours after firing at a second-hand luxury car showroom in the national capital, two more incidents of firing have been reported, police said on Saturday. While some unidentified shooters targeted a hotel at south Delhi's Mahilpalpur area early Saturday, some assailants opened fire at a sweet shop in Sultanpur Mor in Nangloi later. No one was injured in the three firing incidents.

According to a police officer, around 9.30 am on Saturday, two men with their faces covered came on a bike and opened three to four rounds of fire at 'Roshan Halwai'. No one was injured in the incident but there were some shattered glasses in the shop, the officer said. Police suspect the shooting was related to protection money of some gangsters. After the firing at the sweets shop, a note with "Deepak Boxer Bhai, Ankesh Lakra Bhai and Vishal Bhai" —the names of gangsters — written on it, police said. CCTV footage has been collected and a probe was underway, they said. Earlier around 2.30 am, two men came on a motorcycle and fired around five to six bullets at the main entrance gate of Impress Hotel in south Delhi. No one was injured in the incident but some glasses were damaged, police said.

Hotel staff and some guests were present in their rooms when the incident took place. Police has initiated a probe into the case.

On Friday night, three men opened fire at a second hand luxury car show room in Naraina in West Delhi. In this case also, no one was injured but the attackers targeted the cars. PTI

Police personnel investigate after three unidentified assailants opened fire at a car showroom in Naraina. — Photo: PTI

Another infiltration bid foiled: Himanta

GUWAHATI

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday asserted that the Assam government has taken a firm stand against infiltration from Bangladesh and 17 of its nationals, including eight children who tried to enter the Indian territory illegaly, were pushed back on Saturday.

The persons were identified as — Harul Lamin, Umai Khunsum, Md. Ismail, Sansida Begum, Rufiya Begum, Fatima Khatun, Mojur Rahman, Habi Ullah and Sobika Begum. Eight children accompanying them were also pushed back to Bangladesh by police. CM Sarma said that they were arrested along the International Border in the early hours.

Taking to X handle, he wrote, "Taking firm stance against infiltration, <\@>assampolice pushed back 9 Bangladeshis and 8 children across the border in the wee hours today."

Second case

This is the second case in 24 hours when the Bangladeshi infiltration attempt was foiled by the security forces. On Friday, CM Sarma had said that at least three Bangladeshi nationals who tried to enter Indian territory illegally were pushed back by police. Taking to his X handle, CM Sarma posted, "Maintaining strict vigil along the Indo-Bangladesh border, <\@>assampolice identified 3 Bangladeshi infiltrators near the International border - Masum Khan - Iqbal Hussain - Mujanur Rehman They were promptly pushed back to Bangladesh." To recall, the Chief Minister earlier announced a slew of measures to deal with the infiltration issue from Bangladesh which has seen a spike in the last few days. IANS

Apple pulls out of OpenAI's funding round

SAN FRANCISCO

As Sam Altman-run OpenAI prepares to close a potential $6.5 billion funding as early as next week, Apple has reportedly pulled out from the latest round. According to a report in the Wall Street Journal on Saturday, the iPhone maker "fell out of talks to join the funding round".

Apple's involvement was surprising as it is rare for the tech giant to invest in external companies. The reports surfaced after Apple announced a ChatGPT integration into Siri. "Apple is no longer in talks to participate in an OpenAI funding round expected to raise as much as $6.5 billion, an 11th hour end to what would have been a rare investment by the iPhone maker in another major Silicon Valley company," it said. Microsoft and Nvidia have also been in talks. IANS

Sweden joins ISRO Venus mission

NEW DELHI

Sweden has officially joined ISRO's Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM), approved last week by the union Cabinet. The Swedish Institute of Space Physics (IRF) will reportedly provide ISRO with the Venusian Neutrals Analyser instrument (VNA) — a lightweight, low-power but highly capable energetic neutral atom (ENA) analyser. The VNA will study the interaction between charged particles from the Sun and Venus' atmosphere and exosphere. The VOM mission, expected to launch in March 2028, will help unravel "Venusian atmosphere, geology and generate large amounts of science data probing into its thick atmosphere," according to a Cabinet communique.

The Cabinet has also 'approved a fund of Rs 1,236 Crore for the VOM, of which Rs 824 Crore will be spent on the spacecraft'. The VNA will be integrated into the plasma package, Venus Ionospheric and Solar Wind Particle AnalySer (VISWAS), provided by the Space Physics Laboratory (SPL) in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. The IRF was also the Principal Investigator of the plasma package on the European Space Agency's Venus Express mission from 2004-2014. The VOM mission will be Sweden's second Venus exploration.

Sweden has been India's space partner since 1986. It partnered with ISRO on Chandrayaan. It also aims to partner with Chandrayaan 4 and Ganganyaan - - India's human spaceflight mission. Venus is the closest planet to Earth and is believed to have formed in conditions similar to Earth. The VOM probe offers a unique opportunity to understand how planetary environments can evolve. IANS

Israel to keep up attacks on Hezbollah

Military mobilises additional reserve soldiers as tensions escalate with Lebanon

AP
BEIRUT

Israel's Chief of Staff Lt Gen Herzi Halevi said on Saturday that the elimination of Nasrallah was "not the end of our toolbox," indicating that more strikes were planned. Defence Minister Yoav Gallant called it "the most important targeted strike since the founding of the State of Israel."

Israel has vowed to step up pressure on Hezbollah until it halts its attacks that have displaced tens of thousands of Israelis from communities near the Lebanese border. The recent fighting has also displaced more than 2,00,000 Lebanese in the past week, according to the United Nations.

The military said it was mobilising more reserve soldiers as tensions escalate with Lebanon, activating three battalions of reserve soldiers to serve across the country. It sent two brigades to north Israel earlier in the week to train for a possible ground invasion.

Lt Col Nadav Shoshani, the army spokesperson, said Israel has inflicted heavy damage on Hezbollah's capabilities by targeting a combination of immediate threats and strategic weapons, such as larger, guided missiles. But he said much of Hezbollah's arsenal still remains intact and that Israel would continue to target the group.

The military updated guidelines for Israeli citizens, cancelling gatherings of over 1,000.

Meanwhile, Hamas in a statement, issued condolences to its ally, Hezbollah. "History has proven that the resistance ... whenever its leaders die as martyrs, will be succeeded on the same path by a generation of leaders who are more valiant, stronger and more determined to continue the confrontation," the Hamas statement said. It added that "assassinations will only increase the resistance in Lebanon and Palestine in determination and resolve."

Strikes continue on both sides of border

Meanwhile, on Saturday morning, the Israeli military carried out over 140 airstrikes in southern Beirut and eastern Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, including targeting a storage facility for anti-ship missiles in Beirut suburb of Dahiyeh. Israel said the missiles were stored underground beneath civilian apartment buildings.

Hezbollah also launched dozens of projectiles across northern and central Israel and deep into the Israel-occupied West Bank, damaging some buildings in the northern town of Safed.

An Iranian woman raises slogans during a gathering in support of Hezbollah, at the Felestin Square in Tehran, Iran. — Photo: AP

Biden calls Nasrallah killing 'measure of justice'

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden on Saturday called the Israeli strike that killed Hezbollah's Hassan Nasrallah a "measure of justice" for his four-decade reign of terror. He noted that the operation took place in the broader context of the conflict that began with Hamas' massacre of Israelis on October 7, 2023. "Nasrallah, the next day, made the fateful decision to join hands with Hamas and open what he called a 'northern front' against Israel," Biden said. He also noted that Hezbollah under Nasrallah's watch has been responsible for the deaths of thousands of Americans. AP

Shrewd strategist

BEIRUT

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah led the Lebanese militant group for the past three decades and transformed it into one of the most powerful paramilitary groups in the Middle East.

Under the leadership of the 64-year-old, Hezbollah fought wars against Israel and took part in the conflict in neighbouring Syria, helping tip the balance of power in favour of President Bashar Assad. A charismatic and shrewd strategist, Nasrallah reshaped Hezbollah into an archenemy of Israel, cementing alliances with Shiite religious leaders in Iran and Palestinian militant groups such as Hamas.

Idolised by his Lebanese Shiite followers and respected by millions of others across the Arab and Islamic world, Nasrallah held the title of 'sayyid', an honorific meant to signify the Shiite cleric's lineage dating back to the Prophet Muhammad, the founder of Islam. A fiery orator viewed as an extremist in the US and much of the West, he was also considered a pragmatist compared to the firebrand militants, who dominated Hezbollah after its founding in 1982, during Lebanon's civil war. Despite the power he wielded, Nasrallah lived largely in hiding in the past years for fear of an Israeli assassination.

How he rose to power

Born in 1960 into a poor Shiite family in Beirut's impoverished northern suburb of Sharshabouk, Nasrallah was later displaced to south Lebanon. He studied theology and joined the Amal movement, a Shiite political and paramilitary organisation, before becoming one of Hezbollah's founders. Hezbollah was formed by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard members, who came to Lebanon in the summer of 1982 to fight invading Israeli forces. It was the first group that Iran backed and used as a way to export its brand of political Islam. Nasrallah built a power base as Hezbollah over time became part of a cluster of Iranian-backed factions and governments known as the Axis of Resistance. Two days after its leader, 39-year-old Sayyed Abbas Musawi, was killed in an Israeli helicopter gunship raid in south Lebanon, Hezbollah chose Nasrallah as its secretary-general in February 1992.

Five years later, the United States designated Hezbollah a terrorist organisation. Under Nasrallah, Hezbollah was credited with leading the war of attrition that led to the withdrawal of Israeli troops from south Lebanon in 2000, after an 18-year occupation. Nasrallah's eldest son, Hadi, was killed in 1997, fighting against Israeli forces. After Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000, Nasrallah rose to iconic status both within Lebanon and throughout the Arab world. His messages were beamed on Hezbollah's own radio and satellite TV station. That status was further cemented when, in 2006, Hezbollah fought Israel to a stalemate during the 34-day war. When Syria's civil war erupted in 2011, Hezbollah fighters rushed in, siding with Assad's forces — even though Hezbollah's popularity took a dive as the Arab world ostracised Assad.

Role in current conflict

A day after the Israel-Hamas war started on October 7, Hezbollah began attacking Israeli military posts along the border calling it a "backup front" for Gaza. In speeches throughout the conflict, he argued that Hezbollah's cross-border strikes had pulled away Israeli forces that would otherwise be focused on Hamas in Gaza and insisted that Hezbollah would not halt its attacks on Israel until a ceasefire is reached in Gaza.

Over the past weeks, he continued to strike a defiant tone as tension rose dramatically, with Israel announcing a new phase in the conflict intended to push Hezbollah back from the border to allow thousands displaced from north Israel to return. It launched strikes killing commanders.

'Duty of all Muslims to stand by Lebanon'

TEHRAN/BEIRUT

In his first comments since Israel claimed to have killed Nasrallah, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said, "it is the duty of all Muslims to stand by the people of Lebanon and Hezbollah" against the "occupier, evil and suppressor" regime of Israel. In a statement read on state TV, he said "all regional resistance forces" support and stand beside Hezbollah.

Iran's influential parliamentary committee of national security demanded "strong" response to Israel following a meeting of the committee. State TV also said people staged anti-Israeli rallies in support of Hezbollah in major cities and towns in the country.

Iran has condemned Israel's deadly strikes on Beirut, calling the attack a "war crime" and also claimed that the US is complicit. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian described the strikes as a "flagrant war crime" that "once again reveals the terrorist nature of the Israeli regime," the state news agency *Press TV* reported. Iran's Foreign Ministry also denounced the strikes, describing the attack as a "barbaric" act facilitated by American-supplied bombs. "While the Israeli regime must be held accountable for the atrocity, one cannot disregard the US complicity," he said. AGENCIES

Floods, landslides kill 66 people in Nepal

KATHMANDU

Flooding and landslides caused by continuous rainfall has killed at least 66 people in Nepal, and a further 69 are missing, officials said on Saturday.

Rain has been pouring down since Friday night and is expected to continue over the weekend. Home Ministry spokesperson Rishiram Tiwari said there were 66 people reported dead across the country, of whom 34 were in the capital, Kathmandu. Sixty people were injured and 3,010 rescued across the Himalayan nation, he added. He said all divisions of security forces in the country including the army have been ordered to help in the rescue efforts.

Several roads were blocked by landslides triggered by the rainfall.Three highways, including the key Prithvi highway, connecting Kathmandu to the rest of the country have been blocked by landslides, and heavy equipment is being used to try open the routes, said Tiwari.

The government had issued flood warnings across the Himalayan nation warning of massive rainfall. Buses were banned from travelling at night on highways and cars were discouraged. Security forces were ordered to high alert.

Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak said officials are still collecting information on the effects of the flooding. "The government's priority right now is to rescue the people and help those who have been affected," Lekhak told reporters on the day. AP

A man wades through flood waters after the Bishnumati river overflowed due to heavy rain, in Kathmandu on Saturday. — Photo: AFP

Helene claims 52 lives in southeast US

FLORIDA: Massive rains from powerful Hurricane Helene left people stranded, without shelter and awaiting rescue on Saturday — as the cleanup began from the tempest that killed at least 52 people, caused widespread destruction across the US Southeast and left millions of customers without power.

Helene blew ashore in Florida's Big Bend region as a Category 4 hurricane late on Thursday packing winds of 225 kmph and then quickly moved through Georgia, the Carolinas and Tennessee, uprooting trees, splintering homes and sending creeks and rivers over their banks, churning up tornadoes and straining dams. Western North Carolina was essentially cut off because of landslides and flooding that forced the closure of Interstate 40 and other roads.

There have been hundreds of water rescues, none more dramatic than in rural Unicoi County in East Tennessee, where dozens of patients and staff were plucked by helicopter from a hospital rooftop Friday.

The rescues continued into Saturday in Buncombe County, North Carolina, where part of Asheville is under water. "To say this caught us off-guard would be an understatement," said Quentin Miller, the county sheriff. There have been deaths in the county, but Emergency Services Director Van Taylor Jones said Saturday that he wasn't ready to report specifics, partially because communication outages hindered efforts to contact next of kin.

Multiple cell towers are down in the area. The storm, now a post-tropical cyclone, was expected to hover over the Tennessee Valley on Saturday and Sunday, the National Hurricane Center said. It's creating flooding that hasn't been this bad. AP

Harris vows to fix immigration system

WASHINGTON

Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris has vowed to impose tougher security measures at the border and fix America's broken immigration system, as she sought to counter frequent political attacks on the issue from her Republican rival Donald Trump ahead of the November election.

Vice President Harris' comments came during her visit to the US-Mexico border in Douglas, Arizona, on Friday. Despite taking a hardline stance on border security, Harris said she also supports a "pathway to citizenship" for undocumented migrants currently in the US. "As President, I will work with Congress to create, at long last, a pathway to citizenship for hard-working immigrants who have been here for years," she said.

Harris was in Arizona to get a first-hand assessment of the security situation at the southern borders. Slamming Trump, she said politicians have refused to come together and fix the broken immigration system. Illegal immigration is an issue that Americans have been worried about. PTI

Rescue mission for Sunita, Butch begins

CAPE CANAVERAL

SpaceX launched a rescue mission for the two astronauts stuck at the International Space Station on Saturday, sending a downsized crew to bring them home but not until next year.

The capsule rocketed into orbit to fetch the test pilots whose Boeing spacecraft returned to Earth empty earlier this month because of safety concerns. The switch in rides left it to NASA's Nick Hague and Russia's Alexander Gorbunov to retrieve Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams. Since NASA rotates space station crews approximately every six months, this newly launched flight with two empty seats reserved for Wilmore and Williams won't return until late February. Officials said there wasn't a way to bring them back earlier on SpaceX without interrupting other scheduled missions.

By the time they return, the pair will have logged more than eight months in space. They were expected to be gone just a week when they signed up for Boeing's first astronaut flight that launched in June. NASA ultimately decided that Boeing's Starliner was too risky after thruster troubles and helium leaks marred its trip to the orbiting complex. AP

In Brief

MOSCOW

13 killed in explosion

An explosion at a gas station in Russia's southern region of Dagestan killed at least 13 people and injured 23 others, officials said. The explosion triggered a fire that tore through the service station and its cafeteria on the outskirts of the regional capital, Makhachkala, said Russia's Emergencies Ministry, adding that two children were among the dead. The fire was extinguished. AP

ISLAMABAD

Security beefed up

The Punjab government beefed up security measures in Rawalpindi on Saturday ahead of a "peaceful protest" by Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf. Khan had given a call for protest in the city, reversing an earlier decision to hold a *jalsa* (rally) in the historic Liaquat Bagh park of the city, saying the government would not give permission to hold the rally at the venue. PTI

NEW YORK

Mayor pleads not guilty

New York City Mayor Eric Adams pleaded not guilty in an appearance at a federal court in Manhattan, one day after unsealing an indictment against him. Federal prosecutors charged Adams with five counts of bribery, wire fraud and solicitation, primarily related to his mayoral campaign in 2021. Adams, a Democrat, entered the court on Friday morning to have his fingerprints taken. IANS

JOHANNESBURG

17 killed in shootings

Seventeen people including, 15 women, were killed in two mass shootings that took place in close proximity to each other in a rural town in South Africa, police said on Saturday. A search was under way for the suspects, national police spokesperson Brig. Athlenda Mathe said. The victims were 15 women and two men, she said. One other person was critical. IANS

STREAMING NOW

Cricket: Ind vs B'desh, Day 3 2nd Test, 9.30 am on Sports 18 & JioCinema

Cricket: SL vs NZ, Day 4 2nd Test, 10 am on Sony Sports Ten 5

SL chasing historic series sweep

Jayasuriya, Peiris shine; NZ need 315 runs to avoid innings loss

AP
GALLE

Sri Lanka is just five wickets away from sealing a monumental series sweep against New Zealand after reducing the visitors to 199 for five in their second innings on Saturday.

New Zealand, with a daunting 315 runs still needed to avoid an innings defeat, face an uphill battle. The match, poised to end inside three days, was prolonged only due to bad light, forcing umpires to call off play with 20 overs remaining. Day three was nothing short of manic, with the Kiwis losing 13 wickets, including a morning collapse of nine wickets.

New Zealand's first innings imploded for a mere 88 runs — its lowest-ever total against Sri Lanka — thanks to a six-wicket haul by left-arm spinner Prabath Jayasuriya. "It has been a fabulous Test match for us," Jayasuriya said. "All credit to the batters. When they put on 600-plus runs on the board it is really tough when the opposition know the game has slipped away from them.

"We need five more wickets and I am sure we will wrap things up quickly," he added. "In the second innings, they changed their approach and attacked us. I like it when the opposition play aggressively. You will end up conceding runs but then there is a big possibility of you picking up wickets as well. Having claimed nine wickets in the first test, Jayasuriya again proved unplayable on a deteriorating surface tailor-made for spinners.

The Sri Lankan fielders were equally sharp, with captain Dhananjaya de Silva taking five excellent catches in the first innings. New Zealand's attempt to stonewall Sri Lanka's disciplined spin attack in the first innings backfired. But in the second innings, they opted for a more aggressive approach, which initially paid off. Kane Williamson and Devon Conway showcased resilience with a 97-run partnership for the second wicket. Conway's 61 off 62 balls, comprising 10 boundaries and a six, ended with a stunning catch by Dinesh Chandimal, who sprinted back from extra cover to take the difficult chance. Williamson followed soon after, dismissed for 46, courtesy of another superb catch by Ramesh Mendis.

An unbroken 78-run stand for the sixth wicket between Tom Blundell and Glenn Phillips brought some stability to New Zealand's second innings. Blundell, on 47 from 50 balls, and Phillips, unbeaten on 32 from 41, both found the boundary with two sixes each to avoid a repeat of the first innings disaster. Sri Lanka, completely dominating the match, piled on a colossal 602 runs in their first innings, with three centurions leading the charge. Kamindu Mendis' unbeaten 182 was the standout performance, taking him to 1,000 test runs in record time — becoming the joint-third fastest alongside the legendary Don Bradman to achieve the milestone.

BRIEF SCORES: 602/5 decl in 163.4 overs vs New Zealand 88 in 39.5 overs (Michell Santner 29; Prabath Jayasuriya 6/42) & 199/5 (f/o) in (Devon Conway 61, Tom Blundell 47; Nishan Peiris 3/91).

Sri Lanka's Prabath Jayasuriya celebrates the wicket of New Zealand's Kane Williamson during the day three of the second test match in Galle , Sri Lanka, on Saturday. — Photo: AP

Pacer Mayank earns maiden India call-up

Varun returns after 3 years for B'desh T20Is

NEW DELHI

India's fastest bowler Mayank Yadav on Saturday got fast-tracked into the Indian team for the three-match T20I series against Bangladesh after completing his near five-month rehabilitation at the National Cricket Academy.

The team set to be led by Suryakumar Yadav only has one more senior — former T20I skipper Hardik Pandya — in its ranks as all the recent IPL performers have been selected. Mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy, who plays for Kolkata Knight Riders, got a recall after three years since his nightmarish T20 World Cup campaign in the UAE in 2021.

Nitish Reddy, the back-up seamer all-rounder after Pandya and Shivam Dube, also got a look-in after he missed out on the recent Zimbabwe tour owing to an injury. The talented players like Riyan Parag, Abhishek Sharma, Harshit Rana have all found a place in the 15-man squad that has Jitesh Sharma as the second keeper behind Sanju Samson.

The biggest surprise is certainly the inclusion of Mayank, who consistently bowled mid-150 clicks for Lucknow Super Giants during three of his four IPL matches including back-to-back Player of the Match awards which garnered global attention. It was during mid-IPL, the 22-year-old Mayank, who hails from Delhi, was ruled out due to lower abdominal strain.

Such has been his talent that he was wrapped in cotton wool with an extensive rehabilitation programme and of late has been bowling 14-15 overs per day at the NCA.

SQUAD: Suryakumar Yadav (C), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson (WK), Rinku Singh, Hardik Pandya, Riyan Parag, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Shivam Dube, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Varun Chakaravarthy, Jitesh Sharma (WK), Arshdeep Singh, Harshit Rana, Mayank Yadav. PTI

Mayank Yadav

Varun Chakravarthy

IPL Auction: 6 retentions allowed

BENGALURU

The 10 IPL franchises will be allowed to retain a maximum of six players, including one Right To Match (RTM) card at the auction that will cost Rs 75 crore out of an enhanced team purse of Rs 120 crore, the IPL governing council decided on Saturday.

BCCI secretary Jay Shah also announced a fixed match fee of Rs 7.50 lakh for all players selected to play the league games with an additional 1.05 crore income over and above their salaries. A fixed salary purse of Rs 12.60 crore in addition to the auction cum retention purse of Rs 120 crore will have to be kept.

"The first retention will cost Rs 18 crore followed by second retention of Rs 14 crore and third retention of Rs 11 crore. However if a franchise opts for fourth and fifth retentions, they will again have to pay Rs 18 crore and Rs 14 crore respectively. So any franchise opts for all five retentions, then will have only Rs 45 crore to buy or even use their Right To Match (RTM) card to buy another 15 players and prepare a squad," a senior BCCI and IPL governing council member said. PTI

In Brief

BENGALURU

Bengaluru beat Mohun Bagan 3-0

Table-toppers Bengaluru FC defeated Kolkata giants Mohun Bagan Super Giant 3-0 to continue their winning run in the Indian Super League on Saturday. BFC scored through Edgar Mendez (9th minute) before Suresh Singh doubled the lead in the 20th minute. Sunil Chhetri scored from the spot in the 51st minute to round off the tally. The win enabled BFC maintain their unbeaten streak with three wins from as many matches, garnering nine points.

VEINTIANE

India face Laos in must-win tie

Smarting from a heartbreaking loss to Iran, the Indian team faces hosts Laos in a must-win game in the AFC U20 Asian Cup Qualifiers on Sunday, in order to make it to the main tournament. The last time they played in the AFC U20 Asian Cup final rounds (formerly known as the AFC Youth Championship and the AFC U19 Championship) was back in 2006 when they hosted the tournament. India currently second in Group G behind Iran.

BERLIN

St Pauli earn historic victory

Elias Saad scored twice and set up another goal as Hamburg-based cult club St. Pauli claimed its first Bundesliga win for 13 years by 3-0 in Freiburg on Saturday. Saad opened the scoring early, set up the next goal, then sealed the win when he surged past four Freiburg players in the 73rd minute. St. Pauli secured promotion as the second-division champion last season, returning to the top division for the first time since its relegation in 2011.

ABU DHABI

Rickelton, Hendricks fire SA to win

Ryan Rickelton and Reeza Hendricks blasted South Africa to an eight-wicket win over Ireland in a Twenty20 here. Rickelton's 75 and Hendricks' 16th fifty powered South Africa to 178-2 in the 18th over in reply to Ireland's 171-8 on Friday. Brief Scores: Ireland 171/8 in 20 overs (Curtis Campher 49; Patrick Kruger 4/27) lost to South Africa 174/2 in 17.4 overs (Ryan Rickelton 76, Reeza Hendricks 51).

JOE's Gymnastic Academy triumph

Medal winners of JOE's Gymnastic Academy in Hyderabad.

SPORTS BUREAU
Hyderabad

JOE's Gymnastics Academy, Shaikpet, Hyderabad, emerged overall championship winners at the 68th School Games Federation Ranga Reddy District Rhythmic Gymnastics Competition at Saroornagar Indoor Stadium, Hyderabad on Saturday. The academy secured an impressive haul of 10 gold, 7 silver and 2 bronze medals.

RESULTS: Girls: U-14: Hoop apparatus: 1. Sarayu Sri, 2. G Anjana, 3. Sahasra; Ball apparatus: 1. Sarayu Sri, 2. G Anjana, 3. Manya Joyce; Clubs apparatus: 1. Sarayu Sri; Ribbon apparatus: 1. Manya Joyce, Sahasra D.

Angad, Thangaraja share lead

HYDERABAD

Chandigarh's Angad Cheema carded an impressive five-under 65 to emerge as co-leader Sri Lankan N Thangaraja at the Rs 1 crore Telangana Golconda Masters being played at the Hyderabad Golf Association (HGA) course. Thangaraja, the overnight leader by four shots, posted a one-under 69 in round three to share the lead along with Cheema with a total card of 14-under 196.

Kolkata's Shankar Das returned the day's best score of 64 to gain 12 spots and end the day in tied third position at 12-under 198. PGTI Ranking leader Veer Ahlawat's 66 saw him rise two places to tied third. Cheema (68-63-65), who was overnight tied second and four behind leader Thangaraja, came within sniffing distance of the lead early in the day thanks to his four birdies over the first six holes where he landed a couple of approach shots within three feet of the pin. A bogey on the 10th couldn't halt Angad's progress as his ball-striking precision continued on the Par-4 14th where he drove the back edge of the green to pick up another stroke.

Thirty-four-year-old Cheema, who won a title each on the PGTI and the PGTI Feeder Tour in his rookie season in 2013, grabbed the sole lead with a chip-in for eagle on the 17th. However, a bogey on the closing 18th saw Angad drop back into the joint lead. Angad, currently fourth on the PGTI 'Order of Merit' and now looking to end his 11-year victory drought, said, "The game's been good. The few things that I worked on recently have helped my game. There are still some areas that need to be sharpened." Karan Pratap Singh (67) and Saarthak Chhibber (68) were tied for fifth at 11-under 199. PTI

Angad Cheema

Rain in Kanpur washes out 2nd day

KANPUR

The second day of the second Test between India and Bangladesh was on Saturday called off without a ball being bowled due to persistent downpour.

The drizzle in the morning turned into heavy rain, not letting the action begin on day two at Green Park Stadium. The groundsmen put the three super soppers to work around 11:15 am after the rain stopped. The visibility was also poor. As conditions did not improve, the second day's play was called off officially at 2:15 pm. As per the weather forecast, the city is expected to receive rain even on Sunday but Monday and Tuesday are likely to be sunny and warm. In that scenario, the match seems to be headed for a draw. Bangladesh had ended the rain-curtailed opening day at 107 for three as only 35 overs could be bowled.

India pacer Akash Deep accounted for Bangladeshi openers — Zakir Hasan and Shadman Islam — while off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin sent back rival skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto. PTI

> As per the weather forecast, the city is expected to rain on Sunday but Monday and Tuesday are likely to be sunny

Short takes

ATHLETICS NEW DELHI

Gulveer wins gold in Challenge Cup with new national record

India's Gulveer Singh on Saturday set a new national record en route to winning the men's 5000m gold in the Yogibo Athletics Challenge Cup of World Athletics Continental Tour at Niigata, Japan. Gulveer, a bronze winner at last year's Hangzhou Asian Games, clocked 13:11.82 seconds to win the gold in the World Athletics' bronze level meet. The 26-year-old broke his own national mark of 13:18.92s set during the Portland Track Festival earlier this year.

CRICKET LUCKNOW

Mumbai all-rounder Musheer stable after road accident

Musheer Khan is "stable" after suffering a road accident on the outskirts of Lucknow but is set to miss cricketing action for a prolonged period starting with the upcoming Irani Cup. It is learnt that Musheer was en route to Lucknow from Azamgarh, his hometown, for the Irani Cup. He was accompanied by his father Naushad Khan, who also suffered minor scratches in the accident that took place on the Purvanchal Expressway after his car hit a divider and overturned.

FOOTBALL LONDON

Palmer nets 4 in Chelsea's win over Brighton in EPL

Chelsea's Cole Palmer created some history on Saturday when he became the first player to score four goals in the first half of an English Premier League match. His flurry of strikes came in Chelsea's 4-2 win over Brighton that further strengthened the belief that the London team will be a force this season after spending more than $1 billion on players over the past two years. Palmer's 22 league goals last season was second only to Manchester City's Erling Haaland .

FOOTBALL ROME

Martinez scores brace in Inter Milan's victory over Udinese

Lautaro Martinez ended his post-Copa America slump 42 days into Inter Milan's Serie A season, scoring twice in a 3-2 win for Inter at Udinese on Saturday. Martinez led the league with 24 goals last season and scored a Copa-best five goals — including the winner in the final — to lead Argentina to the Copa America trophy in July. After Davide Frattesi opened the scoring for Inter and Christian Kabasele equalized for Udinese, Martinez struck either side of halftime.

FOOTBALL BUENOS AIRES

FIFA suspends goalie Martinez for 2 WC qualifying games

Argentina's soccer association (AFA) said that FIFA suspended goalkeeper Emiliano Martínez for two matches of South American World Cup qualifying in October. The decision rules out the 32-year-old from official games in the round-robin competition against Venezuela and Bolivia on Oct. 10 and 15. AFA said in a statement that FIFA's disciplinary commission sanctioned Martínez due to incidents in two World Cup qualifying matches against Chile and Colombia.

In Brief

HYDERABAD

Ultra-cycling race from October 10

The second edition of India's most iconic and gruelling ultra-cycling race the IndianOil Race Across India is set to begin at Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir on October 10. The race will conclude at the southern tip of India, Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu and cover an extraordinary distance of a staggering 3758 km. Covering an extraordinary distance of 3,758 kilometres.

THIMPHU

India enter SAFF U-17 final

India beat Nepal 4-2 to progress to the final of the 2024 SAFF U17 Championship at the Changlimithang Stadium on Saturday. India scored through Vishal Yadav (61st and 68th minutes), Rishi Singh (85th) and Hemneichung Lunkim (90+5).

Mohammed Ali, Manya win titles

Clinch U-17 trophies in Jr Badminton Championship

Badminton stars Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty with medal winners of the 8th PNB MetLife Junior Badminton Championship on Saturday.

SPORTS BUREAU
Hyderabad

Mohammed Ali Siddiq and Manya Agarwal won the Under-17 boys' and girls' titles respectively in the finale of the 8th PNB MetLife Junior Badminton Championship (JBC) held at Vishwamanya Badminton Academy, East Marredpally, Secunderabad, on Saturday.

In the Under-17 finals, Mohammed Ali triumphed over Marka Sri Harsha with scores of 15-7, 15-9, while Manya secured her victory against Venkataramanan Ananya, winning 15-11, 15-14. This championship marked a historic achievement, as JBC set a world record for the third consecutive year for the 'most kids participating in a badminton championship across multiple cities.' The three consecutive world records from the World Record Certification Agency (WRCA) highlight the championship's importance in junior badminton.

RESULTS: Singles: U-11: Boys: Madivada Rishi Sri Ram bt Bhimavarapu Avyay 15-14, 15-9; Girls: Sania Sharma bt Anvi Reddy Gade 15-12, 15-11; U-13: Boys: Bhavesh A Reddy bt Goel Darsh 15-13, 15-4; Girls: Pakanati Dashuri bt Chennupati Naga Lekshana 11-15, 15-11, 15-9; U-15: Boys: Marka Sri Harsha bt Sethia Krishna 15-13, 15-12; Girls: Manya Agarwal bt Angel 15-9, 15-11; U-17: Boys: Mohammed Ali Siddiq bt Marka Sri Harsha 15-7, 15-9; Girls: Manya Agarwal bt Venkataramanan Ananya 15-11, 15-14.

'Upset' Sinner fights back

Beats Safiullin in 2nd round of China Open amid ongoing steroid controversy

AP
BEIJING

Top-ranked Jannik Sinner rallied to beat Roman Safiullin 3-6, 6-2, 6-3 in the second round of the China Open on Saturday and learned afterward that his steroid case is far from over.

While Sinner was on court in Beijing, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) announced it was seeking a ban of one to two years for the US Open champion who tested positive twice for an anabolic steroid in March but was not suspended in a decision by an independent tribunal announced by the International Tennis Integrity Agency on Aug. 20 because the ITIA determined he was not to blame.

The announcement was made while Sinner was on court against Roman Safiullin at the China Open in Beijing. "Obviously, I'm very disappointed and also surprised by this appeal, to be honest, because we had three hearings. All three hearings came out very positively for me," the 23-year-old Sinner said after beating Safiullin. "You know, I was not expecting it. I knew it a couple of days ago, that they were going to appeal, that today it's going to go official, so... it's surprise," he added. "We always talk about the same thing. Maybe they just want to make sure that everything is in the right position. Yeah, I'm just surprised that they appealed." Sinner tested positive twice for an anabolic steroid in March but was not banned in a decision by an independent tribunal announced by the International Tennis Integrity Agency on Aug. 20 because the ITIA determined he was not to blame.

Italy's Jannik Sinner hits a return to Russia's Roman Safiullin during their singles match at the China Open tennis tournament in Beijing on Saturday. — Photo: AFP

Sinner's accepted explanation was that the banned performance enhancer entered his system unintentionally through a massage from his physiotherapist, who had used a spray containing the steroid to treat their own cut finger. WADA said it filed an appeal on Thursday to the Switzerland-based Court of Arbitration for Sport.

"It is WADA's view that the finding of no fault or negligence' was not correct under the applicable rules," WADA said in a statement. "WADA is seeking a period of ineligibility of between one and two years. WADA is not seeking a disqualification of any results, save that which has already been imposed by the tribunal of first instance." WADA suggested the rules were not followed correctly despite prosecutor Nicolas Zbinden for tennis' integrity body — which accepted Sinner's version of events — being a lawyer who regularly works on high-profile cases for the global watchdog, including the successful appeal against Russian figure skater Kamila Valieva.

Sinner's fate will now be determined by the Switzerland-based Court of Arbitration for Sport after WADA said it filed an appeal on Thursday. On court Saturday, the two-time Grand Slam champion again found himself behind in the Chinese capital after Safiullin broke serve twice to claim the opening set.

Sinner's power and laser-like accuracy from the baseline gradually chipped away at his Russian opponent and helped the Italian to win seven straight games from 2-2 in the second set to take the ascendancy and close out a gritty win. Sinner, who has reached at least the quarterfinals at every tour-level event he has played in 2024, will next play Jiri Lehecka, who earlier defeated Roberto Bautista Agut 3-6, 6-2, 6-1.

Also Saturday, Italy's Flavio Cabolli advanced after a 6-4, 6-2 win over Pavel Kotov. Third-seeded Daniil Medvedev played his second-round match against French veteran Adrian Mannarino later Saturday. In the women's draw, U.S. Open champion Aryna Sabalenka advanced to the third round with a 6-4, 6-1 win over Thai qualifier Mananchaya Sawangkaew.

"In the first set, I was struggling a little bit with the rhythm," said Sabalenka, who's best run in Beijing has only been to the quarterfinals. "In the second set, seems like everything started working much better. I think that's why it was more smooth and better quality." The second-ranked Sabalenka is the top seed in Beijing in the absence of Iga Swiatek.

Next up for the three-time major winner is American Ashlyn Krueger, who beat New Zealand's Lulu Sun 6-1, 7-6 (4). Third-seeded Jasmine Paolini of Italy rallied from a poor first set to beat Denmark's Clara Tauson 1-6, 7-5, 6-4. Paolini will play Poland's Magda Linette after the 31st-seeded player also needed three sets to progress past Moyuka Uchijima 6-4, 4-6, 6-3.

Chaitania, Arsalan in India team

SPORTS BUREAU
Hyderabad

Hyderabad's Chaitania R Kumar and Arsalan Khan are part of the three-member India Arena Polo team, set to compete in the United States Polo Association (USPA) Buddy Combs International Arena Polo Challenge Cup at Lakeside Polo Challenge Cup in San Diego, California from October 3 to 6.

Both Chaitania and Arsalan are from the Hyderabad Polo & Riding Club. Lt. Col. Prithivi Rathore of New Delhi is the third member of the Indian team. This four-day event offers valuable international exposure as they face stronger opponents, preparing them for the World Arena Championship, in February and March next year at which more than a dozen countries from Africa, Asia, Europe and North America will field their national teams.

Arsalan Khan

Chaitania R Kumar

Zonals final: Rahul hits ton

SPORTS BUREAU
Hyderabad

Team Blue's B Rahul's commanding 125 (13x4, 2x6) and Tanay Thyagarajan's solid unbeaten 95 headlined the opening day of the HCA Senior Men's Multi-day Zonals Tournament final against Team Yellow at Gymkhana ground, Secunderabad on Saturday.

At the stumps, Team Blue reached 352/8 in 82 overs.

BRIEF SCORES: Team Blue 352/8 in 82 overs (B Rahul 125, Tanay Thyagarajan 95 batting, Rohit Rayudu 3/75) vs Team Yellow.

MVSR, Villa Marie swimmers grab top honours

SPORTS BUREAU
Hyderabad

Swimmers of MVSR Engineering College and Villa Marie College emerged as the men's and women's champions respectively at the Osmania University Inter-College Swimming Championship held at the GHMC Swimming Pool, Secunderabad on Saturday.

RESULTS: Overall championship winners: Men: 1. MVSR Engineering College, 2. NGIT; Women: 1. Villa Marie College, 2. Kasturba Gandhi College; 100m freestyle: Men: 1. Yousuf Yazani (KMCL) (1:10:38s), 2. Amogh Revelli (NGIT) (1:11:34s), 3. B Amith Lal (Badruka College) (1:13:11s); Women: 1. K Sanjana (Villa Marie) (1:32:11s), 2. Disha (Neil Gogte) (2:39:62s), 3. Juhi Sharma (Villa Marie) (2:59:65s); 100m butterfly: Men: 1. BV Siddarth (MVSR) (1:24:40s), 2. B Amith Lal (Badruka College) (1:31:85s), 3. K Vasanth Yadav (IIMC) (1:38:36s); Women: 1. Ritisha Jaiswal (Villa Marie) (1:20:12s), 2. Astha Singh (Villa Marie) (1:24:16s), 3. DM Harshitha (Shamala Devi) (1:26:28s); 200m individual medley: Men: 1. BV Siddarth (MVSR) (3:09:56s), 2. B Amith Lal (Badruka College) (3:12:60s), 3. Mohd Viqaruddin Siddiqui (ISL) (4:10:11s); 200m butterfly: Men: 1. Abdullah Hafeez (MJCET) (4:53:04s), 2. Abhinav (MVSR) (4:59:74s), 3. B Yash Raj (NGIT) (5:01:60s); 400m freestyle: Men: 1. Amogh Revelli (NGIT) (6:13:21s), 2. Abhinav (MVSR) (7:46:26s), 3. Sharath Chandra (Loyola College) (8:10:12s).

Medal winners of the swimming championship on Saturday

Horoscope

J U B Sastry

ARIES
Aries (March 21-April 20)
With Northern Node controlling ruling quarters, you may try to correct mistakes to safeguard your image this week. With Mars losing strength in debilitation zone, it may dawn upon you that you erred on several issues allowing others to point fingers at you. Your attempts to correct may draw appreciation but delayed realisation may not be productive and useful.

TAURUS
(April 21-May 21)
As Southern Node takes guard of affairs in gains zone, you may become a victim of attention diversion gangs this week. If you are a public figure, opponents may work to soil your image through diversion politics. You need to be cautious when you deal with public issues. Businessmen, you are advised not to reveal personal info to anyone as deceptive influences are heavy.

GEMINI
(May 22- June 21)
As Northern Node continues to influence your thought process, you will be in a rebellious mood questioning things that look traditional this week. You may skip important religious rituals at home or public places. You may be guided by the perception that religious rituals are waste of money, energy and time. You may try to lecture people on such matters.

CANCER
(June 22- July 22)
As Jupiter continues to gain strength in comforts zone, your confidence levels will be higher this week. Your mental stamina will be unusually strong and you will find it easy to manage official or personal interactions and solve issues to your best satisfaction. Love matters may get a big boost as you try to express your feelings straight. The week will be yours in most matters.

LEO
(July 23-Aug. 23)
With benefactor Mars ruling comforts zone, you may be loyal towards people who you think are well-wishers. You may also tend to care for the people who you think are very close to your heart. But the problem is that you expect the same quantity of love and loyalty in return. But, do you know that love and care are not reciprocal? It can be a dull week in many respects.

VIRGO
(Aug. 24-Sept. 23)
You may expect professional and personal rivals to be on the run this week. As you begin it with a strong Jupiter's transit in your other ruling sign, things will move in right direction for you. Mars' influence on your wisdom will keep you highly intelligent and your manoeuvres will remain skilful and talented. Your decisions and actions will outsmart rivals.

LIBRA
(Sept. 24-Oct. 23)
Combustion of Mercury in ruling quarters may keep you on tenterhooks this week. Inconsistency may mar your chances of professional or business growth. With Mars influencing relations, people may find you fickle-minded. You may be undecided on several issues at the workplace but this may help others to outsmart you. Try to be decisive to safeguard your image.

SCORPIO
(Oct. 24-Nov. 22)
Spouse, friends and cousins may be a source of useful and inspiring information for you this week. If your spouse is an independent professional related to fashion sphere, you may learn that she is on the verge of reaching new heights. The great news can be a major topic for discussion in your neighbourhood. You may be elated with spouse receiving praise from everyone.

SAGITTARIUS
(Nov. 23-Dec. 21)
As Jupiter continues to be squared by retrograde Saturn, it is high time that you gave up dreamy thinking. Ensure there is no room for vague and hallucinating ideas in your thought process. Try to see the reality and happenings taking place around you. Keep off friends guiding you on myths and hearsay so that you will be practical to the core. It will enhance your personality.

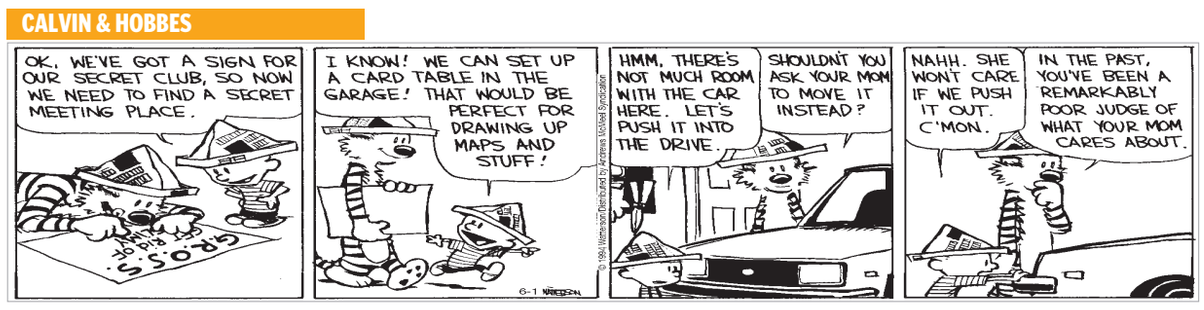
CAPRICORN
(Dec. 22-Jan. 20)
With ruling entity Saturn guiding your thinking, you may think of giving a shape to innovative ideas this week. You may be habituated to keep your thoughts to yourself rather than sharing them but this may not be right. Know that your thoughts will get concretised when you share them with others. Either you have to abandon them or share them with others.

AQUARIUS
(Jan. 21-Feb. 19)
With Venus now moving in work zone, your priorities may change this week. The changes may take place not because of changing circumstances but because of changing necessities. As Moon moves into creative zone midweek, you will find that daughter's necessities have become your priorities. College-going girls will be responsible for changing others' priorities.

PISCES
(Feb. 20-March 20)
As you begin the week with Jupiter influencing your thought process, different perceptions and complexities may influence decisions. Contradictions may keep you confused as you move about your initiatives. You may think of being very fair in your interactions but when it comes to expressing opinions, you may hesitate. However, you may go for a thorough review midweek.

COMIC STRIPS

CALVIN & HOBBES



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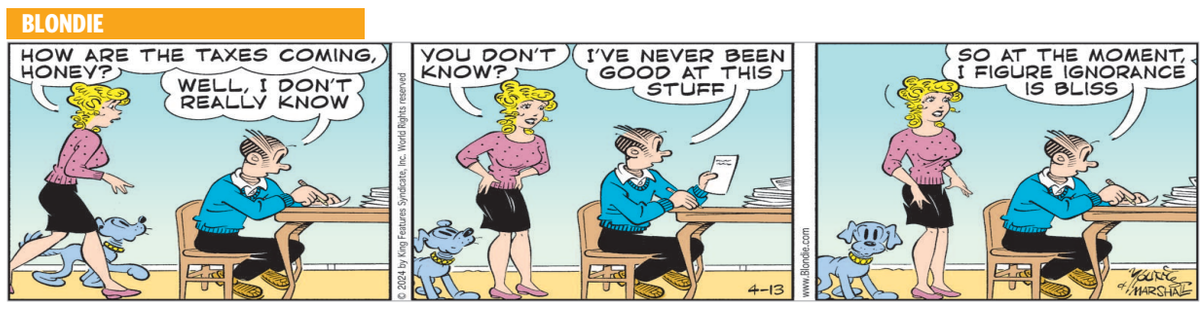
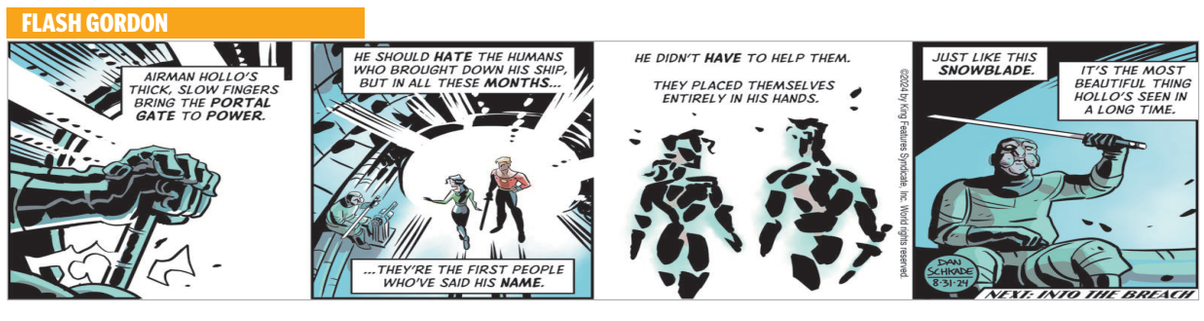


FLASH GORDON



42nd BIRTHDAY

RANBIR ENTERS THE WORLD OF FASHION

THE ACTOR TAKES THE PLUNGE AND LAUNCHES HIS LIFESTYLE BRAND ARKS ON HIS SPECIAL DAY

Bollywood superstar Ranbir Kapoor, who is celebrating his 42nd birthday on Saturday, has ventured into the space of fashion and lifestyle. The actor has launched his lifestyle brand ARKS, taking the plunge on his special day.

Bollywood multi-hyphenate Karan Johar took to the Stories section of his Instagram, and shared a picture of Ranbir, as he told his followers on Ranbir's behalf about the actor's new beginnings. He wrote on the picture, "You've seen the movie star magic and the actor excellence ... now enter the world of Ranbirs lifestyle aesthetics... stay tuned and watch this place for more @arks (sic)." Ranbir's mother Neetu Kapoor, took to Instagram to wish her son a very happy birthday, and mentioned about his lifestyle brand. She wrote, "Happy birthday, my joy, my pride, my purest soul. May you always get in abundance whatever you desire or wish for (sic)."

Ranbir, who belongs to the first film dynasty of Hindi cinema, the Kapoors, is the son of the late actor Rishi Kapoor and Neetu Kapoor. The actor was born on September 28, 1982, and is the cousin of actor Karisma Kapoor and Kareena Kapoor Khan. He is married to Bollywood superstar Alia Bhatt, and the two are proud parents to baby girl Raha.

Ranbir established himself as a superstar after the earth-shattering commercial success of his last release 'Animal', which minted Rs 915 crore worldwide, as per the industry tracker Sacnilk.

The actor will be next seen in the Sanjay Leela Bhansali directorial 'Love & War' along with his wife Alia Bhatt, and his 'Sanju' co-star Vicky Kaushal.

The film marks the reunion of Alia and Ranbir on screen after the fantasy action-adventure film 'Brahmastra: Part One — Shiva' on the sets of which they fell in love and began dating. IANS

Alia shares rare moments with family on hubby's birthday

Alia Bhatt celebrated the 42nd birthday of her husband, actor Ranbir Kapoor, by sharing a collection of adorable unseen family pictures. Among the heartwarming glimpses was a sweet look at their daughter, Raha, adding a touch of joy to the special occasion.

Taking to Instagram, Alia shared a delightful series of photos from their family vacation to celebrate Ranbir's birthday. The first snap captures the trio — Alia, Ranbir, and their daughter Raha, adorably hugging a tree. Another heartwarming image shows Ranbir carrying little Raha in his arms as they stroll through the streets of a foreign land.

A sweet moment features Alia sitting on Ranbir's lap, with his bright smile lighting up the blurred background. The collection also includes a touching photo of Ranbir and Raha walking hand in hand in a horse barn. The final image showcases a heart-shaped balloon reading, "Happy Birthday Ranbir." Alia complemented the visuals with a heartfelt caption: "Sometimes all you need is a giant hug... & you make life feel like one. Happy birthday baby."

Actor Ayushmann Khurrana dropped a red heart emoji in the comment section. Alia and Ranbir had tied the knot on April 14, 2022, in a traditional Hindu ceremony at their apartment in Mumbai.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Alia will be next seen in 'Jigra', which is helmed by director Vasan Bala. IANS

INSTA UPDATE

Experiments with style

Raveena Tandon delighted fans by sharing stunning new pictures of herself in a blue brocade gown, paired with a matching dupatta.

CAPTIVATING FANS

Esha flaunts her 'Om' tattoo

Esha Deol captivated her fans by sharing stunning monochrome photos that showcase her in a figure-hugging outfit.

BIRTHDAY BOY

Vicky, Katrina wish Sunny

Actor couple Vicky Kaushal and Katrina Kaif celebrated the 35th birthday of Sunny Kaushal with an outpouring of affection and heartfelt wishes.

ROMANTIC PICS

Shining in pastel outfits

Divyanka Tripathi Dahiya on Saturday shared a series of romantic pictures with her husband, Vivek Dahiya, capturing the essence of love and togetherness.

'STYLE MY SPACE'

Farah turns interior designer

Farah Khan turned into interior designer for best friend actor-model Maheep Kapoor. In the first episode of 'Style My Space', they featured together.

Sai Pallavi's powerful first look from 'Amaran' out

The makers of Sivakarthikeyan starrer 'Amaran' took to their social media handle and unveiled the first look of Sai Pallavi.

On Friday, the makers took to their Instagram account and shared the character glimpse of Sai Pallavi, essaying the role of Major Mukund Varadarajan's better half, Indhu Rebecca Varghese.

The makers captioned the post, "#SaiPallavi as Indhu Rebecca Varghese, the Heart of Amaran (sic)."

The video starts with a shot of a parade that later comes to Indhu as she walks towards the stage. In the video, the actual byte was also added in which, she says, "What country needs to see today, is the man he was, not my sorrow (sic)."

Later, the glimpse shows Prime Minister Narendra Modi offering the Ashok Chakra to Indhu which later transitioned to Sai Pallavi. The glimpse gives you a gentle touch of Sai's character in the film as she calls Sivakarthikeyan 'Mukundhe', which is purely a goosebump moment with a blend of violin in the background.

The end shot comprises the entire belief of Indhu which she still has for the love of her life which sums up with, "Yes, I am forever in a long-distance relationship with my love."

The glimpse perfectly captures the charm and grief of Sai Pallavi in the role of Indhu which will be another powerful role for her after her thought-provoking performance in 'Gargi'. 'Amaran', helmed by Rajkumar Periasamy, features Sivakarthikeyan, Sai Pallavi, Rahul Bose, Bhuvan Arora, Shreekumar, Shyam Mohan, Mir Salman and Gaurav Venkatesh in pivotal roles.

> Makers shared her character wherein she essays the role of Major Mukund Varadarajan's better half

The music has been done and composed by GV Prakash Kumar and the cinematography has been executed by CH Sai.

The film is based on the life of Major Mukund Varadarajan who lost his life during a search operation in the valley of Kashmir. It is an adaptation of the book series 'India's Most Fearless' written by Shiv Aroor and Rahul Singh.

'Amaran' has been bankrolled by Kamal Haasan, R Mahendran, and Sony Pictures International Productions which will be released theatrically on October 31, in Tamil and Telugu languages. Sai Pallavi will also feature in Naga Chaitanya starrer 'Thandel', helmed by 'Karthikeya 2' director Chandoo Mondeti. IANS

Joseph to visit India for IFP Season 14, says 'feels surreal'

Joseph Gordon-Levitt, popular for films such as '10 Things I Hate About You', '500 Days of Summer' and 'Inception', will embark on his first India visit to attend the IFP (formerly India Film Project) season 14.

Gordon-Levitt will be the special speaker for the opening session of the two-day event, billed as a festival for all things Creativity X Culture, set to be held in Mumbai on October 12 and 13. The Emmy Award-winning actor, known for online platform HIT RECORD, said he is looking forward to coming to India.

"It feels surreal to be visiting India for the first time. I've long been a fan of Indian music and culture and have been engaging with Indian creators through our community, HIT RECORD. Being invited to speak at the 14th Season of IFP is truly an honor. The rise of independent cinema, storytelling, and art in India fascinates me," he said. PTI

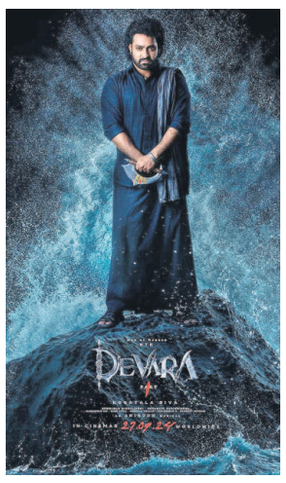
LA has been like a lucky charm now: Jr NTR

Telugu Superstar Jr. NTR took to his social media handle and shared a glimpse of the prestigious film festival in Los Angeles.

Taking to his Instagram, Jr. NTR shared a clip from the stage as he got a huge round of applause at the premiere of his action-thriller 'Devara: Part 1' which commenced at a Beyond Film Festival in Los Angeles.

He wrote the caption, "What an incredible evening watching Devara in Los Angeles. Thank you to the @BeyondFest team and audience for giving me yet another cherished moment with your amazing applauseâ€¦ Much love always! (sic)"

In the video, Jr. NTR is seen receiving thunderous clapping and loud cheers from his fans present there. The film festival was largely filled with western audiences and the rest were Indian viewers who attended the screening which signifies the fan-following of Jr. NTR has increased, especially after his 2022 magnum opus 'Roudram Ranam Rudhiram', also known as 'RRR', helmed by 'Baahubali' fame director SS Rajamouli.



Expressing his excitement for such love and appreciation, the 'Janatha Garage' actor said, "LA has been like a lucky charm now, it's the first time in 25 years of my career. I've never left my home, read my movie, I had to leave my boys, I have a 10 and a 6. I had to leave home, come here, only to spend this moment with all of you. Thank you so much. It was all worth it, it was all worth it."

Jr. NTR's 'Devara: Part 1' was released on September 27, and it is receiving a thumbs-up reaction from the cinema lovers.

The film features Jr. NTR, Janhvi Kapoor, Saif Ali Khan, Shruti Marathe, Prakash Raj, Srikanth, Shine Tom Chacko, Narain and Murali Sharma in crucial roles.

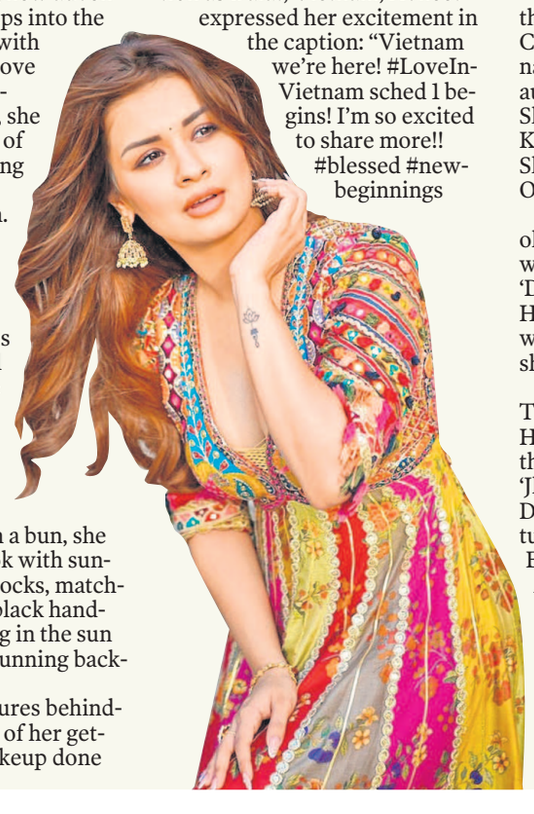
The film is helmed by 'Acharya' fame director Koratala Siva and bankrolled by Kosaraju Harikrishna and Nandamuri Kalyan Ram.

The action-thriller film is released in Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Malayalam, and Kannada.

Apart from this, Jr. NTR will also feature in the Hrithik Roshan, Kiara Advani-starrer 'War 2', helmed by 'Wake Up Sid' fame director Ayan Mukerji. The film is a sequel to the 2019 film 'War', helmed by Siddharth Anand. IANS

Avneet begins filming international project 'Love In Vietnam'

Avneet Kaur has embarked on an exciting new adventure as she steps into the international arena with her debut project, 'Love in Vietnam'. To celebrate this milestone, she has shared glimpses of her journey by posting captivating pictures from Dalat, Vietnam.



Taking to Instagram, Avneet, who boasts 31.9 million followers, shared a set of stylish pictures showcasing her cool chic vibes in a white crop top, a black short skirt, and a black varsity jacket. With natural makeup and her hair elegantly tied in a bun, she accessorised her look with sunglasses, white long socks, matching sneakers, and a black handbag, all while basking in the sun against Vietnam's stunning backdrop.

The post also features behind-the-scenes glimpses of her getting her hair and makeup done for the project. Tagging her location as Dalat, Vietnam, Avneet expressed her excitement in the caption: "Vietnam we're here! #LoveInVietnam sched 1 begins! I'm so excited to share more!! #blessed #newbeginnings #firstsched (sic)."

'Love in Vietnam' is based on the bestseller 'Madonna In A Fur Coat', promising a compelling narrative that will resonate with audiences. The movie also stars Shantanu and Vietnamese actor Kha Ngan, directed by Rahhat Shah Kazmi and produced by Omung Kumar.

On the work front, the 22-year-old diva began her career in 2010 with Zee TV's dance show 'Dance India Dance Li'l Masters'. Her acting debut came in 2012 with Life OK's 'Meri Maa', where she essayed the role of Jhilmil.

She then appeared in SAB TV's 'Tedhe Hain Par Tere Mere Hain'. She also pariticpated in the celebrity dance reality show 'Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa 5' paired with Darsheel Safary. Avneet has featured in TV operas like 'Savitri - Ek Prem Kahani', 'Ek Mutthi Aasmaan', 'Hamari Sister Didi', 'Chandra Nandini', and 'Aladdin-Naam Toh Suna Hoga'.

She has been a part of movies such as 'Mardaani', 'Chidiakhana', 'Tiku Weds Sheru', 'Luv Ki Arrange Marriage'. IANS

Casting for 'Legally Blonde' prequel begins

Reese Witherspoon has announced open casting for the prequel of her popular 2001 romantic comedy 'Legally Blonde'.

Prime Video is making a prequel series for the movie, titled 'Elle' and it will be produced by the actor's company Hello Sunshine.

Witherspoon, who portrayed the role of Elle Woods in the movie, shared a post on her Instagram handle on Thursday about the open casting.

"I have big news to announce today. As you probably know we at Hello Sunshine are partnering with Amazon to launch a new television show called 'Elle' which is a prequel to 'Legally Blonde'. And today, I can't wait to tell you that we are starting the casting process and we are making it open. This is an open casting for young Elle Woods when she was in high school," the video shared.

The caption of the post read, "Our search for the high school version of Elle Woods is officially ON! With our friends @primevideo we're making the casting process totally OPEN, so you can submit your auditions at the link in my bio... I'm SO excited to see all your fabulous takes on everyone's favorite Gemini vegetarian! (sic)"

'Legally Blonde' followed the story of Elle Woods, a young woman who wants to win her boyfriend back after a break up by enrolling in the same law school but during the process, she rediscovers herself. PTI

Movie or GF: When Saif had to choose

Saif Ali Khan, who is set to make his Telugu debut with the upcoming film 'Devara: Part 1', once had to choose between his debut film and his then girlfriend.

An old video of the actor from the 90s has resurfaced on social media, and it shows Saif in conversation with two interviewers, as he spoke about his "moral choice" in his debut film. Elsewhere during the interview, he actor also pulled the legs of the interviewers as he appeared to be in a mood to have some fun. He started off by talking about the subjective nature of struggle, and how it can play out differently for different people.

He said, "What does struggle mean? It means you sit in a rickshaw, and roam around the offices of the studios in search of work. My struggle was different. I was thrown out of my first film. The director told me to choose between the film and my girlfriend. It was a moral choice." IANS